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Why Italy Entered the Great War

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Luigi Carnovale

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Why Italy Entered Into the Great War

Why Italy Entered Into the Great War

By

Luigi Carnovale

Author of "A Visit to the Artist Andrea Cefaly," "My Mother," "The Dream of Francesco," "Journalism of the Italian Emigrants in America."

I speak to utter the truth,
Not out of hate nor scorn for others.
—PETRARCH.

Italian-American Publishing Company
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United States of America
1917

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This labor of love written in exile
I dedicate to the memory of
the fallen and
to the sorrows of the survivors
with thoughts reaching out
toward the highest human ideals
to vindicate the honor of the
Italian people
in the minds of those who
are in ignorance
of the truth.

LUIGI CARNOVALE.

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS
United States of America
July, 1917

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Why Italy Entered Into the Great War

INTRODUCTION

A Question. An Insinuation. A Premise.

Soon after Victor Emanuel III declared war upon Francis Joseph, May 23, 1915, I was frequently plied with questions by thoughtful Americans as to why Italy had entered into the great European conflict.[1] These questions always carried with them a note of affection and regret that

> The beautiful country
> Traversed by the Apennines, bounded by the Alps, and bathed by the sea,

should be imperiled, and it also proves that up to the above date nothing which has been published regarding this extraordinary event has been sufficient to give to the greater part of the American public an exact or even an approximate explanation of the causes which determined the intervention of Italy into the butchery which has been terrorizing and ruining the world.

I therefore believe it to be my duty to set forth in detail, as succinctly as possible and in a volume (for this cannot be done by word of mouth, in a simple newspaper article, or in a pamphlet), the causes for this much discussed intervention. I shall attempt to tell this not in justification nor condemnation of the Monarchical Government of Savoy, for this is not the time for *rédde ratiónem*, but to reply exhaustively to the questions which have been asked me; and above all to vindicate truth and justice, which have been outraged by the charges wrongfully made (pardon my frankness) by many American friends that a people so honest, so proud, and so generous as the Italians have been guilty of infamous treachery in declaring void the treaty of the Triple Alliance and consequently deserting the side of Austria and Germany, and have rushed wildly into a war

[1] Today I could well say: until yesterday, that is, on the eve of the publication of this volume.

against the two allied nations, because they (the Italian people) were bought by English and French gold, and because they were eager to acquire territory such as Trent and Trieste, which by hereditary *divine right* was the possession of the Hapsburgs![1]

I wish further to assert and to repudiate, *a priori*, the charges that I may be in any way actuated, either selfishly or militarily, by a spirit of *chauvinisme*. I adore Italy, the land of my birth, for her glorious contributions of thought and of blood, which she has always given, and gives even now so freely in this ceaseless battle of civilization against barbarism. But in the meantime I admire other countries and love as brothers men of all races, and I will defend with the best forces of my nature the principle of universal peace, having for its basis equality, liberty, prosperity, and happiness for all of the peoples of the earth.

In the development of my present task, I shall use only the most positive elements based upon facts which history

[1] *The World* (the well known daily paper of New York) on January 12, 1917, that is after twenty months of the war between Italy and Austria, commenting on the terms contained in the reply of the Allies to President Wilson, expressed itself, in regard to Italy's Irredentist aspirations on the eastern coast of the Adriatic sea, in the following terms:

In at least two minor respects they [the conditions] *are wholly immoral, in that they contemplate the seizure of territory that never belonged to Italy and Roumania in order to pay the bribes that those two eminently sordid governments exacted as their price for entering the war on the side of the Allies.*

The Italian papers in the United States and of Italy, and the Government of Rome itself by means of its ministers, Ruffini and Bissolati, protested against such statements.

But *The World*, on January 30, 1917, imperturbably repeated its original statement, publishing in its editorial columns the following article:

Italy's claims.—In spite of the protests of the Italian Commissioner of war against a recent editorial in The World, we shall continue to think that Italy's motives in this war are as little defensible as Bulgaria's and Roumania's.

Minister Bissolati is appalled by the colossal ignorance on the part of The World which would deny to Italy her right to vindicate the Italian character of Trieste and which takes no account of Italy's fifty years of heroic resistance against the brutal Austrian domination.

Austria's domination is neither more nor less brutal than it was during the thirty-three years in which Italy was allied to Austria in the Triple Alliance.

Trieste is no more Italian now than when Italy was availing itself of the benefits of its alliance with Austria and Germany. Nor is Europe likely to compel another war by shutting off Austro-Hungary from the sea in order to give Italy territory, to which it is no more entitled racially than it is to a third of Switzerland, and to Nice and to Corsica, which are now held by France.

Many other American newspapers and magazines have repeated and continue to repeat the same refrain.

has already written upon her eternal pages: facts which the press — that foster-mother and forerunner of history — has already recognized and verified, and the absolute truth of which no one can doubt.

Naturally, for logical reasons I must give these facts with illustrative notes, which must be more or less brief. But these notes will be only the limited expression of my own personal judgment and sentiments. A complete expression of the latter would include the enunciation of those principles which inspire me to hold as brothers all victims of social injustice.

The notes which I shall make will give the reasons for the sentiments which, in the spring of 1915, irresistibly pushed the Italians to war against Austria — sentiments in which vibrated, at the same time, the higher and more sympathetic note of human solidarity for the humble, the innocent, and the weak, whose liberty, whose honor, and substance, and all the sacred rights of whose being have been cruelly struck by bestial libidinous satraps placed by God Almighty on the thrones of Europe — satraps who impudently proclaimed themselves Christlike shepherds, while they were not other than ferocious wolves, whose present crimes would terrify the troglodytes of a darkest Africa.

The difficulties of this task will be manifold, but I hope to overcome them.

FIRST PART

I

The beginning of Austria's military violence in Italy. The stoning of the boy Balilla (1746).

Charles VI, Emperor of Austria (1711–1740), some time before his death violated the Salic Law, publishing an ordinance giving *pragmatic sanction* to his appointing his daughter, Maria Theresa, heir to the throne.

The European Powers — France, Spain, Prussia, and Bavaria — which sustained the Salic Law, did not at that time oppose this arbitrary and autocratic ruling of the king. They opposed it only after his death, saying clearly that Maria Theresa could not and must not usurp a right belonging to the masculine sex.

The daughter of Charles VI feigned not to understand her position and continued to execute the will of her august parent. Then the four powers resorted to extreme measures: they proclaimed as Emperor of Austria one of the legitimate pretenders to the throne—Charles Albert, of Bavaria, who assumed the name of Charles VII—and they sent him, accompanied by a great army, to Vienna to take possession of the crown "in the presence of God and the above mentioned."

With the approach of her rivals, Maria Theresa became frightened and fled, and took refuge in Hungary. The Hungarians received her gallantly and offered her the armed support of the Austrians who remained faithful to her in order to recover the Kingdom. The Hungarians and the Austrians were soon supported by England and Holland. and a little later by Charles Emanuel III of Savoy.

Between the two groups a war was started, which lasted for some time. After many battles, favorable first to one

side and then to the other, the decisive victory finally was given to the allies of Maria Theresa. The French and Spaniards, discomfited near Piacenza, could not do other than leave Italy. The daughter of Charles VI could thus confidently and triumphantly ascend the throne.

The Austrian army, emboldened by such success, made war upon Genoa to punish it for having taken the part of the enemy. The city was not in a condition to defend itself. Taken thus suddenly and menaced with shot and shell, she found it prudent to consign the keys of her city to the assailing army.

The drunken troops, mad for gold and vengeance, entered, sacking, insulting, committing such crimes as have never been equaled in history. As if this were not enough, they demanded twenty-one millions of lire for war indemnity. The citizens begged for clemency from the merciless general, who responded that the invaders merited more than they had received — that they *should* have demanded their shirts — adding, "We will leave you nothing except your eyes with which to weep."

Such persecutions lasted for three months. In the afternoon of December 5, 1746, while the troops were dragging some pieces of artillery into the most thickly populated quarters of Portoria, the street gave way in certain places under the weight of the great mortars.

Not being able to continue unaided, the infuriated soldiers commanded the people to help them. This the citizens refused to do, whereupon the soldiers fell savagely upon them in a hand-to-hand struggle, beating everyone regardless of age or sex.

A young boy,— Giovan Battista Perasso, surnamed Balilla,— furious at having been seriously wounded by a trooper, seized a stone, exclaiming, "I'll kill you!" and threw it at his assailant, felling him to the ground. This daring act of the youth inspired his elders with new courage, and in an instant the air was filled with flying missiles aimed at their enemies.

The bells sounded the tocsin. The citizens, who were in their homes, understood its meaning. They armed

themselves, crying, "Viva la Libertà!" and threw themselves upon their enemies in a fierce, stubborn and bloody fight, which lasted five days.

Their oppressors were finally overcome and took flight. They were pursued and dispersed. Shortly after this an artisan, Giovanni Carbone, recovered the keys of the city, and returned them to the Doge and other officials of the city with the following memorable words:

Gentlemen, here are the keys which you so lightly gave to our enemies. Guard them well in the future, for they have been recovered with our blood.

II

The dismembering and repartition of Italy in 1815. The " lion's share " to Austria. The Carbonari.

After Napoleon was conquered at Waterloo, June 18, 1815, and after the treaty with Vienna, dictated by the Monarchs of Europe, Italy was dismembered and repartitioned in the following manner:

The *Kingdom of Sardinia* (Sardinia, Piedmont, and Liguria) to Victor Emanuel I of Savoy;

The *State of Lombardo-Veneto* (Lombardy, Venice, including all of the territory between the Po, Ticino, and the Adriatic, the ancient Republic of Ragusa, the valleys of Val Tellina, of Chiavenna and Bormio) to Austria;

The *Grand Duchy of Tuscany* to the Austrian Prince Ferdinand III of Lorraine;

The *Duchy of Modena and Reggio* to the Archduke Francesco II, cousin of the Emperor of Austria;

The *Duchy of Lucca* to Maria Louisa of Bourbon;

The *Duchies* of *Parma*, *Piacenza*, and *Guastalla*, to Maria Louisa, daughter of the Emperor of Austria and second wife of Napoleon;

The *Roman State* to the Pope;

The *Kingdom of the Two Sicilies* (Southern Italy) to Ferdinand I of Bourbon;

The *Republic* of *San Marino*, under the protection and rule of the Pope;

The *Canton* of *Ticino* to the Confederation of Switzerland;

The *Principality* of *Monaco* to the Grimaldi-Montignon, under the protection of the King of Sardinia;

The *Island* of *Malta* to England;

Corsica to France.

Austria, who directly and indirectly demanded the lion's share, reserved for herself the right to the military occupation of Ferrara and Comacchio.

One can easily imagine the effect of such dismemberment and repartition in the beautiful and unfortunate peninsula; iniquitous laws, additional taxes, despoliation, and injustice of every kind; every crime was committed, as even today is characteristic of Monarchical Government, which, without scruple, places dynastic interests before the well-being of its people.

Fortunately, the Italians were not led like sheep as in the past, but they were roused, their minds having been awakened and quickened by the ideas propagated by the French Revolution and the extraordinary events of the Napoleonic era. Their consciences, which had been dormant because of centuries of servitude, were awakened and quickened.

In the rugged, kindly, and generous mountain regions of Calabria and the Abruzzi, there had been for some time past a secret society known as the Carbonari, consisting of the ablest men in that part of the country. The society had for its purposes the defense, the independence, and the unity of the mother country by any means and at any sacrifice.

The day before the Congress of Vienna, the Carbonari had 800,000 members — both men and women. A few days after the congress, it counted double that number. Citizens of every class and social condition continued to be enrolled.

During the first years of the Carbonari it limited itself to patient and cautious preparatory training. It was

not until 1820 that the society became formidable, more because of its harmony and discipline, its moral and intellectual strength, than because of its numbers. It then began a series of practical and arduous issues which, after fifty years of heroism and martyrdom, culminated in the greatest civil conquest of the century; namely, the taking of Rome and the abolition of the temporal power of the Popes.

III

The Revolutions in the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies in 1820. Austria, with the brutal force of her soldiery, imposes the tyranny of the Bourbons on the Italian patriots who are fighting for liberty. Persecutions and condemnations (1821).

In the year 1820, the revolution burst out in the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, where tyranny reigned, plotting, and restricting and strangling every breath of liberty. On the morning of July 2d, a detachment of soldiers with their officers from Nola and Avellino rose up, crying, "Give us the Constitution! Long live the Constitution!" (The Carbonari had permeated even the ranks of the army.)

This cry of rebellion was taken up and ran like lightning throughout the entire Kingdom, rousing and electrifying the people. It seemed like the roar of an angry ocean. On the evening of July 6th, it was reported that the patriotic, energetic, and universally esteemed General Guglielmo Pepe had assumed the leadership of the revolution. This unexpected news added fuel to the fire. This same night the leaders of the Carbonari of Naples presented themselves at the royal palace and daringly demanded the Constitution in the name of the people and of the army.

The King refused with the typical arrogance of tyrants. The Carbonari listened to him in silence. When he had finished, they left his presence in dignified silence. A few moments later an immense crowd of civilians and soldiers, flocking together as brothers, ran roaring like lions through

the streets of the city. The Bourbon heard the cry. He trembled like a rabbit. He could not sleep. Before the dawn he published the following proclamation:

As it has been manifested that it is the general wish of the nation to have a constitutional government, it is our earnest desire to comply with this, and therefore we promise, in the course of a week, to publish the basis of it.

But the insurrectionists were not so easily satisfied. They knew that in 1812 Ferdinand had conceded a Constitution, and had afterward abrogated it in secret. They demanded a more concrete and positive guarantee from him, namely, to swear on the gospels to give them the constitution, and to give to General Pepe the command of the entire military forces of the state; to name a committee, which should arrange the meeting of the congress.

The Bourbon made a virtue of necessity and yielded.

General Pepe, who was in Monteforte, on July 9th made his triumphal entrance into Naples. It was in the evening of the same day that the poet Gabriel Rossetti sang:

At last you have come — you have come,
O longed-for day!
Everything around us shines
With new joy;
Redemption of our country
On every brow is written.
This time I do not dream,—
I dream no more, O Liberty!

On the 13th of the month, in the private chapel of the royal palace, and in the presence of General Pepe, the provisional commission, ministers, and dignitaries of the court, Ferdinand swore solemnly to support the Constitution, which was similar to the Spanish Constitution of 1812. On that occasion the king emphasized and ended his speech in the following impressive words:

Omnipotent and all powerful God, who with infinite wisdom canst read the hearts and the future of finite men, if I lie, or fail in my oath, thou, at that instant, direct upon my head the lightning of thy vengeance!

The scene was deeply impressive. Gabriel Rossetti, who had sung in verse "The Promised Constitution," now saluted "The Sworn Constitution" with a hymn of thirty strophes of which the following are the most prophetic:

> Citizens, we can now rest secure
> Under the shade of our gathered laurels,
> But with one hand on our dreaded sword
> We are guarding our mother country.
>
> The wise, unlike the foolish,
> Prepare for war in time of peace.
> Yes, peace shines on our faces,
> But war, war is brewing in our hearts.

These events, however, had the effect of worrying the monarchs of Europe. The Emperor of Austria, Francis I, and his colleagues of Russia and Prussia met in a congress at Troppau, a city of Silesia, to discuss the grave situation. They were not long in coming to an agreement, and they decided to enjoin Ferdinand to abrogate by conciliation the constitution which he had promulgated. Ferdinand gave them to understand that this would be impossible by such means. Then the three monarchs met again in December at Laibach the capital of Carniola (this time with representatives of the other Powers), "to ameliorate," said Prince Metternich, Prime Minister of Austria, "the internal condition of the *Two Sicilies*."

Ferdinand, the Bourbon, secretly wrote to the kings, begging them to invite him to the congress, when he would explain his conduct and at the same time suggest the most efficacious means of suppressing the liberal spirit of the Neapolitans. He was invited. But the Constitution which he had promulgated forbade his leaving the Kingdom without the permission of Parliament; consequently, he was obliged to swear that if he were permitted to go he would defend the cause of the people. "I will defend," he said, "the position taken by us last July. I wish for my Kingdom the Spanish Constitution, and I will demand peace, because my conscience and my honor demand it."

This new vow gave to him the wished-for permission to

go, but before going he named his son, Francis, regent to the throne, with the title of Vicar. When he arrived at the Congress, however, he explained that the reason why he had given the Constitution was because it had been wrested from him by force; that he considered as nothing his obligations toward the revolutionists, and that military occupation was the only means of re-establishing and consolidating the sovereignty of the monarchy.

The anointed of the Lord listened to him and approved, and February 9th, 1821, they ordered the immediate re-establishment of the absolute government in Southern Italy by means of their minister, Metternich, who loved Italians as one loves smoke in the eyes.

The Neapolitan Parliament replied by preparing for war. An Austrian army was not long in appearing on the border. Gabriel Rossetti[1] incited Italy to rise up against her invading enemies in the following lines:

Arise! Why delay?
You sleep, Italy! Ah, no!
The aurora of Liberty
Has risen on your hills.

Arise! Bridle the course
Of the invading foe.
O, slave of your slaves,
You were at one time queen.

Unsheath your sabre like a goddess,
Replace your helmet on your brow;
At last the time has come
For your escape from servitude!

But thanks to the treason of the Vicar, that prince to whom had been ingenuously given the direction of the war, the Austrian forces did not meet with much resistance. They easily entered the city on March 13, 1821, and with great pomp re-consigned the scepter of despotism to Ferdinand.

[1] Gabriel Rossetti, born at Vasto (Abruzzi) in 1783, died in London in 1854; was the father of Dante Gabriel Rossetti, celebrated English poet and painter, founder of the pre-Raphaelite school.

The perjurer made use of his power by immediately wreaking his vengeance on the revolutionists. By means of corrupt judges the best citizens were condemned to death, to life servitude, and to exile, and their property was confiscated. Then, fearing new military insurrections, he dissolved the army and confided the care of his person to several battalions of Swiss mercenaries and to 35,000 Austrian soldiers, who were in the capital. These newly made police completed the disastrous work of the tyrant by committing indescribable depredations and brutalities.

Ferdinand retained these protectors in the Kingdom of Naples until one fine day in 1825 he departed this world, execrated by all. His successor, Francis I, who was equally iniquitous and short-sighted, could not long bear the expense of their support. They despoiled the people and emptied the public treasury. He consequently sent them away, comforting himself with the hope that they could be returned if the Carbonari should become troublesome.

IV

The Revolution of Piedmont in 1821. Austria, with the brutal force of her soldiery, imposes the tyranny of the House of Savoy on the Italian patriots who were fighting for liberty. Persecutions and condemnations.

The example of the Neapolitan Carbonari was followed by their brothers of Piedmont.

In January, 1821, the students of the University of Turin placed on their breasts the badge of the Constitution of Naples, and appeared suddenly in the streets in a demonstration exalting liberty.

The police made an assault upon them. All of the young men were unarmed, and the police beat them, and forced them to retreat. But such coercion, instead of restraining, excited them the more. The demonstration was repeated in Turin and in other cities of Piedmont, and assumed a character conspicuously revolutionary at Ales-

sandria, where the citizens and soldiers rose up (March 10th) crying, "Long live Italy! Long live the Constitution!"

Victor Emanuel I, King of Savoy, Sardinia, Piedmont and Liguria, and "an enemy of liberal ideas," rather than accede to their demands, preferred to abdicate (March 13th) in favor of his brother Carlo Felice, who at that moment was in Modena acting as regent for the cadet Prince Carlo Alberto of Savoy-Carignano. The latter, that same night (March 13th), conceded the Constitution, and formed a provisional ministry at the head of which was Count Santorre of Santarosa, who was one of the principal leaders of the revolution and who promised to maintain all of the concessions which had been made.

But Carlo Felice, bitter enemy of every liberty — even worse than his brother — as soon as he knew of this, was enraged, and made an energetic protest in which he declared void the conceded Constitution. He ordered Carlo Alberto to resign the regency immediately and go to Novara, where, under the orders of General Sallier della Torre, the troops who had remained faithful to the absolute monarchy would be assembled. The prince obeyed, and the Carbonari, who ingenuously expected from him an act of resistance against the despotic impositions of the king, cried "Traitor!" to him.

An army of 30,000 men — a majority of whom were Austrians — invaded Piedmont, defeated the Constitutionalists and re-established the reactionary dynastic government.

Carlo Felice, like the Bourbon of Naples, began to persecute the Constitutionalists. Two partisan tribunals, which he especially appointed (one for civilians and one for the military), condemned more than 1,000 persons to the extreme penalty of the law. Santorre of Santarosa saved himself by running away. He died in exile at Sfacteria, generously fighting for the independence of Greece.

Carlo Alberto went first to Tuscany, and then to Spain, where he took part against that people, who like the Italians were fighting to liberate themselves from the yoke of oppression. He took part in the assault of the Trocadero

(with the fall of which fort the Spanish Constitution was also destroyed). He distinguished himself and thus entered again into the good graces of Carlo Felice.

The occupation of Piedmont by the Austrians lasted until September, 1823, and cost the public treasury 18,000,000 lire, besides the over-taxations, extortions, and humiliations which the depraved troops imposed privately on the citizens, guilty only of having offered their lives for their love of country and for liberty.

V

Austria, with the brutal force of her soldiery, imposes her own tyranny on the patriots of Lombardo-Veneto, who are fighting for liberty. Persecutions and condemnations (1820–1821).

If Austria was cruel to the Italians who were governed and supposedly protected by her, it is easy to imagine her brutality, after the short-sighted treaty of Vienna had thrown them into the rapacious claws of the double-headed eagle.

The Carbonari of Lombardo-Veneto, in the year 1818, founded a journal called *Il Conciliatore;* the director of it was Silvio Pellico, a pleasing writer, an educator in the highest sense of the word, and a patriot, gentle but forceful.

The apparent object of the paper was "to conciliate in the literary field, not the loyal with the false, but all of the lovers of truth; the scope of the journal is to point to Italians the way to redeem their country."

But they counted without their host. The Austrian Government had, besides an enormous contingent of troops armed to the teeth, a special service of police in which predominated, in number, in knavery, and in villainy, secret agents and spies of every kind.

The Government, however, was not long in discovering the thing which *Il Conciliatore* was hiding under its literary discussions. In September, 1819, the publication was prohibited, and then the government began the persecution of

its founders, its editors, its contributors and supporters, and all those who were suspected of having had any relation with the suppressed journal.

In the meantime, the Neapolitan Revolution burst out. The Carbonari of Lombardo-Veneto could not long remain inactive; the most daring openly expressed their sympathy for, and solidarity with, their brothers of the south; but they were quickly overcome by the preponderating and all-powerful force of the tyrants.

Hundreds of citizens, among whom were Pellico and many of his friends, were arrested, insulted, condemned to death, dragged in chains to Spielberg (a remote fortress in Moravia), thrown into dark and dirty cells, and left in the custody of ignorant and cruel keepers, who snapped at them like snarling mastiffs. Others escaped to free and hospitable countries.

The death sentence, which had been imposed upon those who were thrown into Spielberg, was commuted to ten, fifteen, and twenty years each in prison.

The poet Giovanni Berchet, one of the most brilliant writers on *Il Conciliatore*, and one of the most ardent conspirators, justly exclaimed from his exile:

> Infinite are the griefs of Italy,
> Immeasurable are her sorrows!
> She longs for liberty; but, foolish,
> She believed in her princes, and confided
> Her destiny to their promises;
> Her princes traduced her,
> They surrounded her by perfidy,
> They sold her to strangers.
> They broke her legions,
> And closed the lips of her sages,
> And manacled the feet of the just!

The tortures which they suffered were met with heroic resignation. They were described "dispassionately" by Pellico in his admirable book, called *My Prisons*, which cost Austria the condemnation of the world, while the victims of her tyranny were given immortal fame as martyrs of the Italian Risorgimento.

VI

The Revolutions of the Duchies of Modena and Reggio and in the Roman State (1831). Austria, with the brutal force of her soldiery, imposes the tyranny of one of her princes and the tyranny of the Pope on the Italian patriots who are fighting for liberty. Persecutions and condemnations.

The reaction raged for ten years, but it could not extinguish the fires of liberty which burned in the volcanic breasts of the Italians.

The revolution, crushed in the south and north, burst out in the center of the peninsula. Ciro Menotti, a patriot of noble and determined purpose, led a group of daring and faithful companions to prepare for the revolution in the Duchies of Modena and Reggio, where the Austrian, Francis IV, tyrannized barbarously over the people. History records that he nailed the political prisoners to the floors of their vile dungeons in fetters, in manacles, and with collars of iron.

The revolution was to have commenced about the 4th or 5th of February, 1831. But, on February 3d, the ducal police, having been advised by spies, arrested every suspected person.

Ciro Menotti understood that there was no time to lose; he had to act carefully and energetically. That same evening, February 3d, he called together the chief conspirators to make their final plans. But Francis IV commanded eight hundred soldiers and two guns. They surrounded the house and attacked it with shot and shell. The conspirators defended themselves herocially for a time, but were finally overcome by force of arms and numbers, and with his companions, Ciro Menotti, wounded and bleeding, was made a prisoner.

Francis IV, crazed with joy at his victory, the next morning sent a special courier to the governor of Reggio with the following letter:

To-night the revolution broke out. Send me the hangman.
FRANCIS.

This laconic cynicism showed the idiotic depravity of the man whom the potentates of Europe had believed worthy of governing such a people as the Italians.

In the meantime the revolution burst out also in Bologna. The populace attacked and destroyed the city hall and the pontifical coat of arms, substituting in its place the white, red, and green flag of Italy. They expelled the representatives of the sacred chair, declaring the temporal power of the popes abolished. They named a provisional commission whose duty should be to prepare and announce elections and to form a definite constitutional government.

The vehement impetus given by "learned Bologna" was followed in a flash by other cities of central Italy. The Romagna, the Marches, and Umbria proclaimed themselves free.

Francis IV trembled — he did not feel safe in Modena — he fled, accompanied by a swarm of Austrian soldiers and the hangman, dragging with them Ciro Menotti "as hostage." He betook himself to Mantua, a city belonging to the state of Lombardo-Veneto, where he placed himself under the direct protection of his imperial Austrian cousin.

Toward the first of March, 1831, great Austrian armies invaded the Duchies of Modena, Reggio, and the Roman State. They encountered the Revolutionists, who were relatively few in numbers, badly disciplined, and poorly armed, therefore, they were defeated effort, and they fell again under the power of the tyrants.

Francis IV re-entered his dominions on March 9, 1831, determined upon revenge. He immediately created a special tribunal, charged with the duty of judging all of those "who were armed, or who with secret conspiracies had taken part in the revolt."

The first to be condemned to death was Ciro Menotti, who was executed on the ramparts May 26, 1831. He bore the extreme penalty of the law with the stoicism of a great soul. The same day, Vincenzo Borelli, a lawyer, was also hanged for having compiled the act which declared the

government of Francis IV overthrown. More than five hundred patriots, falling into the hands of the tribunal, were condemned, some to death and some to the galleys. More than a thousand saved themselves by taking the sad road of the exile.

Not less cruel was the fate of the Revolutionists of the Roman State. Gregory XVI (Mauro Cappellari), irascible and obstinate, and enemy of every human liberty, "filled up the prisons with honest citizens and used the gallows without stint;" and to sustain the tyranny which he represented, he maintained in the Roman State for seven years at public expense, several thousand soldiers who did not fail to commit their usual outrages, even more ferociously than usual because they were fanatically certain that they were fighting for worldly honor, for the glory of the vicar of God on earth, and for an Austrian prince.

Thus Italy fell again, more servile, more abject, and more divided, under the rule of the tyrants.

Thus the Carbonari brought to an unhappy ending its active labor, but its glorious cycle of history was not without fruition.

VII

A new national conscience is formed by the forceful teachings of Mazzini, Gioberti, and other great Italians, impelling the people to thought and action. The tyrants, both big and little, are obliged to concede the benefits of liberty to the oppressed people. Only Austria, despising and challenging them, continues to oppress the people of Lombardo-Veneto.

Not in vain was the magic word liberty resounded along the shores of the Tyrrhenian, the Ionian, and the Adriatic seas and carried to the heights of the Apennines and the Alps, reawakening and inspiring the people. Not in vain had thousands of chosen souls bravely suffered martyrdom for their country.

From the sacred revolutionary ruins of 1820-21 and 1831, there rose up a leader — powerful, austere and serious

Giuseppe Mazzini, founder of *Young Italy* in Marseilles in 1832, with the prophetic motto: *God and the People, Liberty, Equality, Humanity, Independence and Unity!* There also came Vincenzo Gioberti, Alessandro Manzoni, Cesare Balbo, Massimo D'Azeglio, Francesco Domenico Guerrazzi, Giovan Battista Niccolini, Terenzio Mamiani, Antonio Rosmini, Giuseppe Giusti, Gino Capponi, Cesare Cantù, Niccolò Tommaséo, Giuseppe Montanelli, Federico Sclopis, Ignazio Petitti, Giacomo Durando, Carlo Cattaneo, Giuseppe Ferrari, Daniele Manin, Ruggiero Settimo, Camillo Benso di Cavour, Alessandro Poerio, Giuseppe Garibaldi, and many others — philosophers, poets, scholars, jurists, economists, statesmen, heroes,— all offering to their mother country, which they found in a pitiful condition, the light of their minds and the loving impulses of their faithful hearts; that devotion which Giacomo Leopardi, the poet of sorrows, had already seen and engraved with dazzling strophes in one of his typical poetical rhapsodies:

O country mine, I see thy walls and arches
And columns, and the relics, and the lonely
Towers of our ancestors;
But the glory I do not see:
I do not see the laurels, and the arms with which our ancient fathers
Were adorned, now disarmed,
Showing bare their heads and breasts,—
Alas, what bruises!
What pallor! what bloody wounds! Oh! in what state I see thee,
Majestic creature! I demand of high heaven
And of the world, tell me, tell me,
Who has reduced thee to this? And worse still,
Thine arms have been chained.
Thus, with disheveled hair and naked,
She sits upon the ground, neglected and disconsolate,
Hiding her face
Between her knees, and weeps.
Thou weepest and with good reason, Italy mine,
Born to conquer all
In prosperous and in evil times.

If thine eyes were two living fountains,
Thou couldst not weep enough
For all thy sorrow and all thy shame;
Because once thou wert Queen, but now a miserable slave.
All who speak and write of thee,
Remembering the glory of thy past,
Say, "She was great who now is fallen."
Where, where is thine ancient strength?
Where are thine arms, thy valor, thy constancy?
Who has ungirded thy sabre?
Who has traduced thee? By what arts, what works,
Or by what power
Have they been able to despoil thee of thy regal robes?
How hast thou fallen
From such heights to such base depths?
No one to battle for thee? No sons
To defend thee? Give me arms! Give me arms! I alone
Will fight and fall for thee!
Grant, O heaven, that my blood
Shall be as fire in the veins of Italians.

They, the giants just mentioned, notwithstanding their differences in certain fundamental points of their ideals (Mazzini, for example, wanted a republic with Rome as the capital; Gioberti wished a federation of princes with the Pope as chief; others wanted a monarchy with Carlo Alberto as king), came with their vigorous and persistent protests against tyranny, reawakened faith and formed a new national conscience which forced the tyrants to concede certain liberal reforms, and hurried the epopee of the Italian Risorgimento.

In 1846 Giuseppe Giusti, the greatest satirical poet of the century, synthesized the united desire of all Italians in the following lines:

We want each son of Adam
To count as one man, without Teutons;
We want Heads with heads; we want
Laws and governments, without Teutons;
We all want
Italy to be Italy, without Teutons;
We want to pay in money and in brains,
But without Teutons.

On June, 16, 1846, Cardinal Giovanni Mastai Ferretti was elected Pope. He assumed the name of Pius IX and began his reign by pardoning all condemned political prisoners. He named Cardinal Gizzi, a man known to be a liberal, secretary of state; mitigated the vigor of the censorship of the press; instituted the office of state council in which each province had two representatives; permitted the formation of civic guards; and cried aloud from the Vatican, "God bless Italy!"

The joy of the patriots was without bounds and was equaled only by the stupefaction of Austria; and Prince Metternich was heard muttering, "We had reason to expect any evil except that of a liberal Pope."

The other rulers were obliged to follow the example of Rome.

The King of the Two Sicilies, Ferdinand II,—nicknamed "King Bomba" because of his bigotry, suspicious nature ferocity and injustice—tried to resist; but there followed a general revolt of the Sicilians, who constituted a provisional government under the presidency of Ruggiero Settimo (January, 1848), as well as a revolt and uprising of Salerno and Naples, which forced the tyrant to consent to a representative constitution on February 10.

These same concessions were repeated by Leopold II, Grand Duke of Tuscany (February 17th), and by Carlo Alberto (March 4th), who succeeded to the throne of Carlo Felice in Piedmont. Even Pius IX, who, truth to tell, did not intend to compromise himself too much, was obliged also to concede a constitution (March 14).

It was only the Italians of Lombardo-Veneto who were not permitted to enjoy the benefits of liberty. They were treated with even greater oppression than before. The Imperial Austrian Government stripped them to their skins by means of its tax-gatherers, and, with its standing army (there were almost 100,000), intimidated and hectored them. By means of spies and police who were chosen from the lowest class of the underworld, they were plotted against, villified and put without scruple into the hands of the executioner.

Life in those two unfortunate regions became unbearable.

VIII

The Revolutions of 1848 in Italy. Milan rises against Austrian tyranny and fights epically for five days. The troops of Field Marshal Radetzky (20,000 men, infantry and cavalry, with sixty field cannon) slaughter the innocents; burn alive men, women and children; nail nursing babes to the walls of houses; they string infants on stacked bayonets and carry them around as trophies; outrage women, kill them, cut off and put in their pockets the ringed hands from the dead bodies; rob, pollute, massacre, burn; commit numberless and unspeakable crimes. And the Milanese — heroic and victorious — respond with civil generosity for the evil which they had received. Venice also rises up, drives out the Austrian oppressors, and re-establishes the ancient Republic of St. Mark.

On March 17, 1848, some of the citizens of Milan presented themselves to the Austrian Field Marshal, Josef Wenceslaus Radetzky, Governor-General of Lombardy, who had full civil and military powers, to beg of him to treat the people more humanely; but they were received with shots, many were killed, many were wounded, and others were dragged to prison.

The measure was full; was running over. There ran through the city — which did not contain more than 200,000 inhabitants — a lion-like growl of indignation, the forerunner of a storm.

Radetzky saw the gathering of the clouds, the lightning and the darkness which impended. He knitted his brows, tightened his thin lips, and meditated on what his next step should be.

He had in Milan twenty-four battalions of infantry, six squadrons of cavalry (20,000 men in all), and sixty field cannon. He immediately ordered all of the gates of the city closed and rigorously watched to prevent the Revolutionists

from receiving re-enforcements from the surrounding country. He directed a large part of the army against them and placed the cannons of greatest caliber in the most central and most restless quarters. He commanded the cavalry to search obscure places, to prevent the assembling of groups of people either outside or inside the walls, and frustrated every attempt to make demonstrations. He ordered and disposed of everything as seemed best to him.

The Milanese on their part did not stand idle. They worked assiduously and rapidly. First of all, they named a Committee of War presided over by Carlo Cattaneo, an ardent follower of Mazzini, a man of intellect and integrity, educated at the school of the illustrious philosopher Gian Domenico Romagnosi, whom Austria persecuted in 1821; then the Milanese, with sticks and stones, vehicles, casks, barrels and sacks full of sand, with doors, windows, furniture, bales of cotton, and other stuff, in a few hours constructed more than 700 barricades. They armed themselves with old muskets (the rifles of the newer models had been sequestered from the citizens by Radetzky), brandishing sticks and pitchforks, scythes, axes, spits, knives and forks. At dawn, on the morning of March 18, 1848, they sounded the tocsin. This was immediately responded to by the boom of cannons.

The saddest feature of war is that it is without doubt the result of excited passions: it is life for life; it is carnage. But not always (so history teaches) are the hearts of combatants insensible to human impulses. The fight lasted for five days (from the 18th to the 22d of March, 1848). The Austrian soldiers committed, or rather repeated with diabolic voluptuousness (accursed hereditary vices!) the atrocities of the ancient barbaric hordes. The Milanese, instead, performed acts of heroism in which hate and fury were more than once forgotten, to give place to pity toward the fallen enemy.

On March 18, 1848 (when the hostilities were hardly begun and the spirits on either side were not yet roused to a state of excitement), a handful of Austrian cavalry, skirmishing between Porta Tenaglia and Porta Porcellina,

saw three carriages taking away old men, women and children, who were attempting to escape the storm which was beginning to rage in the city. The soldiers rushed upon them, stopped them, felled them with their sabres, killed a driver, swore at, maltreated and terrorized them, dragged them to the castle as if they were "prisoners of war"; threw them into a deep dungeon, massacred them, and set fire to their bodies. "I entered to explore with a crowd of people on the sixth day" (March 23, 1848)—says Salvatore Mazza —"and there was presented to my eyes in the courtyard a spectacle which struck me with horror! In a shapeless mass of ashes and rubbish I saw the remains of carriages, iron tires and hubs, skulls of horses, human legs and arms, detached from their bodies, which were crushed and burned."

Other Austrian troopers broke into a house in Via Cavalchina, put everything in confusion, found a young book-keeper, who had not had the courage to take part in the offensive and, with his little family, was timidly hiding in a room. They killed him by firing several shots at his head. The wife of the poor fellow, crazed with grief, threw herself on her knees and sobbingly implored pity at least for the babe which she pressed to her breast. The cowardly ruffians laughed contemptuously at her and fired their guns in the face of the innocent little creature!

Other Austrian troopers broke into the house of the parish priest of San Bartolomeo, destroying and ruining everything they touched, insulting and making "prisoners" of everyone whom they encountered. They found in a little room, silent and alone, the priest, who was writing a Lenten sermon for his faithful; they reviled him, swore at him, seized him by the nape of the neck, shook him, hurled him to the ground, and with the butt ends of their rifles and points of their bayonets beat him and left him half dead!

Other Austrian troopers invaded the silk factories of Fortis, rummaged about, turning them upside down, spoiled the machinery, broke the looms; wrested off, dirtied and tore to pieces the silk, killed the workers. They passed into the private offices of the proprietors, broke the furniture,

smashed the safes, which were full of money and jewels, and robbed them of their contents; they killed other persons, went to the wine cellars and bored into the casks and gorged themselves to drunkenness with the contents. And when in the evening they abandoned the place, laden with their booty, and with hands, faces, and clothing covered and stiff with blood and dust, the robbers and murderers left behind them a mass of ruins and cadavers!

On March 19th, other Austrian troopers, filled with rage, broke into a house from which they suspected certain stones had been hurled at them, and, cursing and roaring as if possessed, they pulled down the doors, splintered the furniture, killed the first innocents whom they encountered, declared "prisoners" those who had miraculously escaped death, bound them, insulted them and threw them down the stairs; they broke down the door of the house of a little cobbler, jumped on the back of a poor paralytic octogenarian (the mother of the cobbler) who had fainted from fright, rolled her on the ground, stamped her underfoot and reduced her to a rag!

Other Austrian troopers, also outside of Porta Tenaglia, stopped a diligence which was on its way to Saronno, shot and killed the horses and the driver, dragged the nine passengers into a neighboring orchard, and buried them alive!

Other Austrian troopers, while committing every sort of destruction in Sambuco and Scaldasole streets, broke into a miserable little house, found an invalid, a man, covered him with blows and kicks, and then crucified him by nailing him to the wall!

Other Austrian troopers entered a house between the streets of Porta Comasina and Santa Theresa, where five women had taken refuge; they plundered and set fire to it. The three oldest begged for their safety, and for reply they were brutally pushed into the flames and burned alive; the soldiers then grasped the two youngest, tied them with their arms behind them, dragged them to the ramparts, outraged them, hanged them from a tree, and while thus hanging, they tormented them with obscene language and derisive laughter,

spitting in their faces, and finally riddled them with bullets amid hoarse hurrahs of triumph!

Other Austrian troopers entered the house of Giovanna Piazza and also into that of the widow Caravati, and stabbed the son and the brother of the first and the son of the second.

Other Austrian troopers entered a courtyard off the little street called "Stretto Calusca," where many families of the working people live; threw themselves like wild beasts on the first persons they met, and without regard for age or sex, and listening neither to cries nor prayers, kicked, abused and threw them on the ground. They seized Giuseppe Gambaroni, fifty-eight years old and married, Antonio Piatti, twenty-eight years old and unmarried, and the sixteen-year-old boy Giuseppe Belloni, and dragged them to a nearby orchard. There the Austrian soldiers threw them against one another as if they were playing battledore and shuttlecock with them, pushing them and receiving them on the points of their swords and bayonets while the wife of Gambaroni, and the parents and sisters of Piatti and of Belloni, weeping, begged them in vain for mercy. Finally, to add to the misery of the unfortunates, and better to view and enjoy the spectacle, several hussars dismounted and several infantrymen of the Baumgarten regiment went in search of straw, returning shortly with several mattresses which they emptied, throwing the contents on the three unfortunates and setting fire to them. And when the agonized victims attempted with their last strength to free themselves from their torture, the Austrian soldiers with shouts of joy pushed them into the flames with the points of their bayonets and forced the relatives of the victims to watch the horrible scene!

Other Austrian soldiers entered a house, heard the wail of a nursing babe, took it out of the cradle, spread its little arms and hands on the wall and nailed it "as if it were a bat or some other beast"; and then with a blow from a bayonet they felled the mother to the ground, killing her instantly!

Others filed on their stacked bayonets nursing babes, and carried them around as trophies of war!

Other Austrian troopers cut off the delicate white hands of women on which were precious rings and carried them about in their pockets!

Other Austrian soldiers murdered and burned entire families of women and children, committing horrible crimes not only in the city but also in the suburbs.

"The Croatians" — thus runs a narrative, sent on April 10, 1848, from Milan to Venice—"were more cruel to the women and children than to the men. In one house were found murdered thirteen persons, among whom was a mother with two babes in her arms, one of which was beheaded and the other with the bayonet driven upward through the jaw. Another babe was split entirely in two, lengthwise, and the two halves were nailed on the wall; another babe was saturated in resin and burned. A little girl was filed on a bayonet and carried about through the streets. The heart of a woman was torn from her breast and roasted. A babe of forty days was cut into small pieces and also roasted."[1]

What a difference on the other side, worthy of the "gentle Latin blood!" The following episode (one could narrate many such records, but for reasons of brevity and delicacy easy to understand one does not wish to continue) I am sure will be sufficient to give an idea of the generosity with which the Milanese replied to such inhuman treatment.

The police from the first had worthily assisted the soldiers in their crimes; but one night, in their central offices, they "amused" themselves by shooting from their windows and killing persons as they passed by. They were notified that the Revolutionists were about to descend upon them strong and victorious. The scoundrels trembled like rabbits, took to their heels and fled, and in running forgot to call their chief — a certain Bolza — who had retired to an inner room to eat and to sleep.

This Bolza — "the product of the lowest class in society, short, fat and deformed, who seemed to possess character-

[1] For an account of these incredible atrocities see the documents conserved in the archives of Milan, the consular reports, the papers and pamphlets of that time and *The Five Days* described by the same Carlo Cattaneo and by other accredited historians.

istics of the monkey and the tiger" — had been for several years one of the most zealous, faithful and fierce bullies upon whom Austria depended, and as such was the terror of Lombardy. He had unjustly condemned to death, to life imprisonment and to exile, hundreds of patriots; he had thrown into misery and mourning hundreds of families. The Emperor Francis I for such services bestowed upon him the title of count. But the people feared and hated him.

The clamor of the insurgents as they invaded the offices of the police, shouting "Viva l'Italia," roused the wretch, who was dozing. He was startled and turned livid and flaccid with fear, but he lost no time. He gathered up and pocketed the remains of his lunch, which consisted of a little bread and cheese (such creatures always seem to have ready the animal-like instincts for their own preservation), ran and hid himself under a straw-stack. He was quickly discovered and dragged out. He was filthy. He was wild-eyed. His teeth chattered. He was muttering. He wailed "I am to blame!" He begged of them to let him live, promising in exchange for his life to reveal to them secrets of the greatest importance.

This disgusted the Revolutionists. They roared with rage, and the most fiery of them wanted to tear their former tyrant to pieces. The calmer, however, opposed this. Then for advice, they sent to Carlo Cattaneo, who responded with the following: "If you kill him you will not be giving him justice; if you do not kill him, you will be doing a holy thing." The members of the war council — Enrico Cernuschi, Giulio Terzaghi, and Giorgio Clerici — hastened to corroborate the sentence of their magnanimous president by publishing and spreading abroad the following proclamation:

> Brave Citizens: We will keep our victory clean; we will not descend to revenge ourselves with the blood of those miserable satellites which the fugitive powers have left in our hands. It is true that for thirty years they have been the curse of our families. But you are generous as you are valiant. Punish them with your contempt.

On March 22, 1848, the Austrian troops were defeated

in truth, "carrying as hostage several citizens tied to the mouths of cannons with the fuses lighted!"

The humiliating tyranny of the barbarians in Italy was finished. The two hundred bells of the proud metropolis of Lombardy rang with joy. The national white, red, and green banner of Italy triumphantly and gloriously floated from the loggias of the public buildings, from the balconies and windows of the private houses. The citizens ran through the streets shouting, laughing, embracing and kissing each other, crying "Viva la Libertà! Viva l'Italia!"

Soon after this the English vice-consul at Milan, Robert Campbell, sent a detailed report of the facts to Lord Palmerston. This report, after a description of the atrocities committed by the Austrian soldiers and after a description of the generosity of the Milanese, closed thus:

Up to the present time it is impossible to give in any way the approximate number of dead and wounded in the battle of these five days. Here the most perfect quiet reigns because of the rigorous orders and good system of the Provisional Government (this is the title taken by the municipality). As one must expect, the exuberant joy of the reported victory made the Milanese almost delirious. But they committed no excesses.

And the *Allgemeine Zeitung* of April 2, 1848, published the following letter sent to it by one of its special German correspondents from Milan, March 28, 1848:

A tremendous cannonading covered the Austrian retreat which could not be prevented. Then finally it was possible for me to see with my own eyes the horrors which the troops had committed. In the suburbs there were found entire families of the aged, women, children and nursing babes, horribly massacred and mutilated. Of the citizens, who were imprisoned in the castle by the Austrians, some were brought as hostages, and others were shot. Wherever one might look, he saw blood. Everywhere was devastation and fires. Many of the details of these horrible crimes I saw with my own eyes — my pen refuses to describe them. I prefer to describe less than the truth, and pass to the other side, from which there comes to me a sweet comfort. The conduct of the Lombardians was noble and generous. The first victories were won by them without arms. Barehanded they wrenched

the weapons from the enemy, and they — the Lombardians — dared and accomplished this. All honor to their courage! Their conduct after the victory was characterized by temperance and restraint, for it was not blemished by a single act of vengeance. All of the wounded Austrians were nursed and cared for like brothers by the Lombardians. All of the prisoners were held in custody, but were treated with the greatest indulgence; they lacked nothing. The most hated man in Milan, the commissioner of police Bolza, was taken by the citizens, but they spared his life.

Added to their glory of fearlessness in the face of death, the Lombardians showed a sublime magnamimity after victory.

History, which passes judgment, will transmit to posterity the memory of these deeds.

The Venetians also were roused. They already had presented to the Austrian governor a demand for reforms, signed by the statesman Daniele Manin and the writer Niccolò Tommaséo,[1] men of rare moral qualities and highly esteemed by the people. But the governor responded by having them arrested and thrown into the dark secret dungeons of the famous prison, the Piombi, and threatened "the audacious signers" with the extreme penalty of the law.

The citizens were infuriated; they invaded the arsenal, provided themselves with arms and ammunition, ran roaring to the jail, tore down the door, took the two illustrious prisoners, put them on their shoulders, carried them out in triumph, faced the troops of their oppressors, and forced the Austrians to fly immediately from the city. They re-established (March 22d) the ancient republic of St. Mark, named as Doge this same Manin, and Tommaséo as Minister of Public Instruction. Again they, like their brothers of Lombardy, breathed the sweet air of freedom.

[1] Niccolò Tommaséo, eminent Italian scholar, critic and educator of Sebemico (Dalmatia), author of a *Dictionary of the Italian Language*, a *New Dictionary of Synonyms*, a *Dictionary of Esthetics*, a volume on *Education* and other works (1802–1874).

IX

The Hymn of Mameli. The first War of Liberation—The Italians are defeated because of the defection of Pope Pius IX and of the Bourbon King of the Two Sicilies. The Austrians are again rulers of Lombardy (1848).

Expelled from Milan, from Venice, and from other cities of Lombardo-Veneto, the Austrians took refuge in the fortifications formed by the "Quadrilateral" Verona-Peschiera-Mantua-Legnago, and there prepared to reconquer them; that is, they prepared to repress with new violence the political spirit of independence and unity which fired the Italians, but instead they succeeded in increasing the latter's activity and power of resistance.

But Carlo Alberto, pressed upon from every side, hurried with twenty-five thousand men in aid of his brethren, who were threatened again by powerful outside imperialism. While crossing the river Ticino (the latter part of March, 1848), he invited the princes of the other states of Italy to participate with him in this "holy war."

Meanwhile the twenty-one-year-old poet Goffredo Mameli fired souls with the following hymn:

Brothers of Italy,
Italy has wakened;
The helmet of Scipio[1]
Encircles her brow.
Where now is victory?
Let her advance her crest;
For God created her the servant of Rome.
Let our cohorts stand close,
Ready to face death,
Italy has called us.

We through the centuries,
Downtrodden and scorned,

[1] Scipio, the great Roman warrior who conquered Hannibal at Zama (202 B. C.).

Because not one nation,
But scattered, divided:
Now we must rally
Round one flag and one hope;
The hour has come
For our fusion.
Let our cohorts stand close,
Ready to face death,
Italy has called us.

Let us unite!
Union and love
Reveal to the people
The ways of God;
Let us bow to free
Our native land;
If we're united
Who can defeat us?
Let our cohorts stand close,
Ready to face death,
Italy has called us.

From the Alps to Sicily,
Everywhere is Legnano;[1]
Every man has the heart
And hand of Ferruccio;[2]
The boys of Italy
Are called Balilla;
Every bugle is a call to
"The Vespers."[3]
Let our cohorts stand close,
Ready to face death,
Italy has called us.

The hireling swords
Bend like a bulrush;

[1] The battle of Legnano, in which the Italians surrounding the *Carroccio* and crying, "Victory or death!" defeated the armies of Barbarossa, May 29, 1176.

[2] The defense of the Florentine Republic against the armies of the Emperor Charles V and Pope Clement VII heroically sustained by Francesco Ferruccio (1530).

[3] The liberation of Sicily from the insolent tyranny of the French on the evening of March 31, 1282, has passed into history under the name of *The Sicilian Vespers.*

The eagle of Austria
Is stripped of her plumage;
The blood of Italy,
With the blood of Poland,
Which she has drunk with the Cossack,
Has burned to her soul.
Let our cohorts stand close,
Ready to face death,
Italy has called us.

The peninsula became a volcano in eruption. Only one cry was heard: "Out with the Austrians!"

The Grand Duke Leopold of Tuscany was constrained by such popular enthusiasm to send 8,000 regulars and volunteers to the battlefields of the north. Pius IX was forced to send 10,000. Ferdinand II of the Two Sicilies sent 16,000 under the guidance of the venerable General Guglielmo Pepe, who had returned to Naples after twenty-seven years of exile. The minor Italian potentates were obliged to send in proportion to their dominions. Those who left for the fields of battle wore the tri-colored badges on their breasts and sang the hymn of Mameli and other war-like songs, exalting their Patria and execrating their enemies. The women scattered flowers before them, and showered blessings upon them as they departed.

They won the first battles. They won the battle of Goito (May 3, 1848). The same evening they took the stronghold of Peschiera. The god of war seemed to smile on all their efforts. Lombardy and Venice, in the height of their joy, voted their annexation to Piedmont.

These extraordinary and unforeseen successes disturbed the tyrants. Pius IX hurried to recall his troops under the pretext that he, in his capacity as head of the Church, could not participate in a war between Christians. The king of the Two Sicilies, infuriated against the citizens, abolished the Constitution and also commanded his soldiers to return. These cowardly creatures (unfortunately not a few) obeyed him. The pontifical generals, Giovanni Durando and Pepe, however, with their men who remained faithful, went boldly on. But one could foresee that the

defection of the Pope and the Bourbon would produce a certain demoralization in the rank and file of the liberating army. Radetzky profited by it, and aided by Generals Nugent and Welden, arrived on the battlefields of Lombardy with strong re-enforcements, took the offensive, defeated the Italians at Custozza on July 20, 1848, re-entered as proud conquerors the city of Milan (August 6, 1848), obliged Carlo Alberto to call an armistice and to recross the Ticino, and again imposed the yoke of servitude upon the people.

Venice alone would not yield quickly to such humiliation. She reconstituted her republic and confided the dogate again to Manin. General Pepe, with the remnants of the southern army, entrenched himself inside the confines of the lagoons, and prepared a glorious defense.

The Viennese, however, after a bloody revolution (October, 1848), forced Emperor Ferdinand I to cede the crown to his nephew, Francis Joseph.

X

The Austrian soldiers re-enter Milan, giving themselves up to rapine and vandalism. Field Marshal Radetzky extorts the extraordinary tax of 20,000,000 lire from 185 "noble and prominent citizens" (1848).

Radetzky, at Milan, immediately announced that he had concentrated all the civil and military powers of administration and declared the city in a state of siege; he ordered all of the prominent patriots who had not already had the time nor recognized the necessity of escaping from the city to be beaten and shot; he ordered the women and children to be whipped; in short, he displayed his usual arrogance and committed crimes of every sort.

The barbarous marshal "re-established order" in this manner and afterward left the field free to his troops. These showed themselves worthy of their high commander. Officers and soldiers, who were in large part Croatians

and Bohemians, occupied the houses of the fugitives, preferably those of the patricians who were more distinguished than the others in the days of the Revolution; they robbed and destroyed them from cellar to roof; they dug up the marble floors, smashed the mirrors and vases, threw the archives into the courtyards; they tore the tapestries, dirtied the paintings, made kitchens of the art galleries, burned furniture, books, and parchments of inestimable value, presented the silk garments and the fine linens of the ladies to the women of the street and pocketed everything possible. Sacking, vandalism, and other orgies followed which were worse than bestial. They were not satisfied with this. They wanted money. Radetzky thought to extort it by imposing the extraordinary tax of 20,000,000 lire (burdening the noble and prominent citizens), after he had exacted from the people the payment of redoubled tributes and hundreds of other burdens.

"I have determined," commanded the tyrannical marshal in writing, "that there must be added to this contribution from the members of the former provisional government, a penalty on the heads of those who took a principal part in the various committees,— those who were the leaders of the revolution and who contributed to it by material or intellectual means."

Those designated numbered 185.

The Austrian military gallantry imposed on a lady — the Princess of Belgiojoso — the greatest sum: 800,000 lire. This was followed immediately by a smaller amount from the Duke of Visconti di Mondrone, the Count Vitaliano Borromeo, and the Duke Litta. The lowest amount imposed upon any of the patricians was 10,000 lire. The bankers and merchants, such as Milius, Mondolfo, Ponti, Raymmi, and Seufferheld, were obliged to pay 50,000 lire each. Even Maggiore Ospedale (the hospital) had to pay 300,000 lire!

One can imagine the miserable condition into which the unfortunate metropolis of Lombardy was reduced in the latter months of 1848.

XI

The insurrection at Rome. The Papal Prime Minister Pellegrino Rossi is killed. Pius IX flees in the night to Gaeta. The Roman Republic is proclaimed with Mazzini, Saffi, and Armellini at the head. The second War of Liberation against Austria. The Italians are defeated because of their commanders. Carlo Alberto is obliged to abdicate in favor of his son Victor Emanuel. The Austrians, emboldened, extend their tyranny to Piedmont (1849).

But the defeat did not discourage the Italians. It made them even more daring and more active; it retempered their strength.

Because Pope Pius IX had betrayed the national cause, had killed the Prime Minister, Pellegrino Rossi (November 15, 1848), and had planned the arrest and expulsion of well-known patriots, the people of Rome rebelled against his retrogressive Government and forced him to leave the capital during the night and repair to Gaeta, where he found the King of the Two Sicilies. They then elected a constitutional assembly which, after long and animated discussions, approved and published (February 9, 1849) a decree declaring the papacy "fallen in right and in fact from the temporal government of the Roman State" and proclaimed the Republic, with its head a triumvirate (March, 1849) composed of Mazzini, Aurelio Saffi, and Carlo Armellini.

In Tuscany the people made repeated redemptionist demonstrations, forced the Grand Duke Leopold to follow the Pope to Gaeta, and confided the public affairs to Guerrazzi, Giuseppe Montanelli and Giuseppe Mazzoni.

In the other parts of the peninsula the people were equally restless. They clamored for war, war, at any cost, to the last drop of their blood!

> We will fight — we will fight,
> While a warrior remains,

Until the rays of the Italian sun
Shall no longer cast a shadow on a stranger.
(*Arnaldo Fusinato*)

Until not in one corner of the
Mother country will there be a slave,
Until Italy shall be one
From the Alps to the sea.
(*Goffredo Mameli*)

On March 12, 1849, Carlo Alberto was obliged to abandon the truce which he had made with the Austrians the year before, and he again began hostilities.

The ninety thousand Italians whom he commanded were strong, brave, and enthusiastic, ready for any sacrifice for the good of their country. When they encountered the army of the enemy, they fought with force and resistance; but they were defeated at Mortara on March 21, and again on March 23, at Bicocca, near Novara, all because of the unfitness of this same king and other commanders. It was a terrible catastrophe.

Carlo Alberto was again forced, as in 1848, to demand an armistice; but the conditions imposed by the Austrians were so onerous, so dishonorable, that he could not accept them. Then he could not do other than abdicate. In the late evening he gathered about him his sons and his surviving generals under the walls of the fated city, and there he took the great step, pronouncing in the silence and with voice humble and grieved the following words:

I have done everything possible for the cause of Italy. My greatest sorrow is to see the failure of my hopes. Perhaps my person is the only obstacle to obtaining an equitable agreement from the enemy. And as there is no alternative other than to continue the war, I renounce at this instant the crown, in favor of my son, Victor Emanuel, in the flattering hope that he may obtain better pacts and procure a more advantageous peace for the country.

And at midnight the vanquished king sadly went his way, accompanied only by one servant. He went incognito (taking the name of Count de Barge) to Portugal, where he died four months later in the convent of the Jesuits.

The young King, Victor Emanuel II, encountered Radetzky on the battlefield of Vignale. He had to make the best of a bad bargain, and signed an armistice by which he was obliged to recognize the right of Austria to the military occupation of Alessandria and the territory included between the rivers Po, Sesia, and Ticino. He was compelled to retire the Piedmontese fleet from the waters of the Adriatic sea (it had been sent there at the beginning of the war), which meant the complete abandonment of Venice into the hands of the enemy. He was obliged to pay — and how effectively he did pay at the conclusion of peace!—75,000,000 lire for war indemnity.

The chain of servitude was thus riveted. As the vultures gnawed the heart of the mythological Prometheus, so the rapacious eagle of the Hapsburgs continued to devour the hearts of Italians.

XII

The "Lioness of Italy." At Brescia the Austrian soldiers "throw the heads of infants, torn from their bodies, the arms of women and children, and burned human flesh on the barricades of the citizens as if they were throwing the remnants of a dinner to dogs, and commit other unbelievable villainies." The tragic revenge of a young Brescian who was burned alive (1849).

The first news which reached Lombardo-Veneto led the Italians to believe that the Austrians, not the Italians, were defeated at Novara on March 23, 1849. One can imagine the exultation of the patriots. Those of Brescia armed themselves, sang praises to the victory, enjoined the soldiers of the garrison (500 in all; the others had already gone to the war) no longer to encumber the earth which was not theirs. The Austrians responded by sending secretly for immediate aid; then they enclosed themselves in the castle, which overlooked the city, and which, in anticipation, they had filled

with provisions and munitions, and from the high fortress they began bombarding the city.

The Brescians were not discouraged; they faced the fight resolutely and vigorously; they fought with zeal and valor; they had almost reached victory when there was hurled from Verona the first aid to the enemies — a column of troops with numerous artillery in command of General Nugent. This made them realize immediately that at any cost the general would force his way into the city. "It were better that the rebels should destroy the barricades erected by them, throw down their arms, and surrender themselves at discretion." He gave them four hours to reply, "while with great difficulty he held back his soldiers, and for compassion made them silence their guns."

At such arrogance, the citizens burned with indignation, crying tempestuously: "We will resist! Rather than to cede this we prefer death under the ruins of our homes."

Nugent began the attack. He hoped to crush "the audacious subjects" in the twinkling of an eye; but, instead, he himself was crushed, falling dead in the encounter. General Hayman, a bestial person, was immediately substituted with other re-enforcements.

The new commander gave more stringent orders and threats than had his dead colleague. The Brescians replied stubbornly: "Liberty or death!" Then there burst forth a tempest of shot and shell, followed by a destruction of houses nd a slaughter of inhabitants. But the defenders were not terrified, were not confounded; they felt instead, rising and vibrating in every fiber of their being, an invincible power; they became as giants; they battered their assailants over and over again; they performed acts of valor worthy of an epopee. Even the women showed themselves valiant and daring. Among these were two sisters of good family who died like Christian martyrs.

This contempt maddened the Austrians. The military pride with which they were swelled could not tolerate the proud resistance of the citizens, who were given no more consideration than a flock of sheep. On the morning of April 1, 1849, they made a furious assault and with great

numbers they fought savagely, decisively. The defenders, although hard pressed for several days, kept their heads; they disputed every foot of ground, they spent their life's blood freely; and in the end the opposing forces fell upon one another in a hand-to-hand conflict. And then, only then, could the enemy, passing over heaps of the dead, enter the glorious city of Brescia, which the poet afterwards called "The Lioness of Italy."

The Austrian troopers, made more ferocious by the resistance which they met and the losses to which they were subjected, broke like hungry wolves into the houses which remained intact after this long bombardment. They sacked the best and destroyed the remaining, cut the throats of the sick, the old, women and children. Of the latter many were nailed to the walls. Little nursing babes were filed on stacked bayonets. Men and women were killed in the streets with blows from swords and guns. Others were dragged to the castle and there thrown into dungeons, insulted and massacred en masse.

They committed thousands of atrocities and the sight seemed to turn the heads of the people and freeze the blood in their veins. To this was added the view of the horrible excesses committed by the imperial Austrians, because of their blood-drunkenness or because they were commanded to do so, or because they were stolidly ferocious; atrocities which seemed to go beyond the credible and even the imaginable. The imperial Austrians were not only infuriated against the unarmed, the women, the children, and the infirm, but they so refined their tortures that they seemed human wild beasts; they surpassed in ferocity any wild animal. They lacerated the limbs of the victims; they, the Imperial Austrians, threw them out of the windows on to the barricades of the citizens as one throws the remains of a dinner to the dogs. Heads of tender children torn from their bodies, arms of women and roasted human flesh rained upon the Brescians,—outrages before which bombs seemed as nothing. And above all, these Imperial Austrian cannibals felt a special joy in seeing the atrocious convulsions of those who were burning to death; they saturated citizens with resin and set fire to them; and often they obliged the women of the martyrs to assist them at this festival; and further to deride the noble Brescian blood which was

boiling with holy wrath, they tied the men tightly, and before their very eyes outraged their wives and daughters, and then cut their throats. And sometimes (God forgive us if we do not forget this fact) the imperial Austrians made the agonized citizens swallow the torn viscera of their loved ones. Because of this many died of anguish and many more went mad.[1]

A citizen by the name of Carlo Zima, who was burned alive by the Austrian soldiers, was avenged in a tragic manner. He was a fragile young fellow — a hunchback — but he had fought day and night like an ancient gladiator. Some soldiers surprised him while he was standing at arms. What did they do? They threw tar on him and set fire to it. In a flash the body of the unfortunate boy was in flames. The soldiers laughed and danced around him like redskins. Zima, in an impulse of fury and indignation, threw himself on the leader and inciter of the demoniac gang, clung to him with a death grip, surrounded him with the same fire and forced him to die the same death as himself.

But this policy of torture was not enough. The Austrians extorted from the Brescians the sum of 6,000,000 lire. Such villainies roused all Europe. Some time after, General Hayman went to London. Some one recognized him in the streets by his blond mustache. Soon a crowd surrounded him, throwing missiles and mud at him and crying, "Give it to him, the old Austrian butcher! Give it to him, the tiger!"

[1] See *The Ten Days of Brescia*, by Caesar Correnti, an eminent writer, author of various historical works, deputy to the Italian National parliament, twice minister of Public Instruction, and councillor of State.

XIII

The Austrian soldiers in Tuscany, in Bologna, and in Ancona. The tyrants crush the Roman Republic, which had been so gloriously ruled by Mazzini and defended by Garibaldi, and re-establish the temporal power of the Popes (1849).

On the first of May, 1849, the Austrian General d'Aspre at the head of 20,000 soldiers invaded Tuscany; raided towns, despoiled and abused the populace; then suddenly and pompously entered Florence (May 25th), and re-established the power of the Grand Duke. This unscrupulous tyrant, who served the Hapsburgs, soon abolished the Constitution and the national flag, and took possession of the government with the help of the police and the prisons. About the same time, four different armies (one French, one Austrian, one Spanish, and one Bourbon) marched against Rome with the intention of crushing the Republic and re-establishing the temporal power of the popes.

The first to arrive at the gates of the eternal city were the French (a few less than 9,000) in command of General Oudinot. They immediately began the artillery attack, while the infantry attempted to scale the walls. But Garibaldi — to whom the triumvirate, Mazzini, Saffi, and Armellini, had wisely confided the defense of the Republic — hurled himself, with his volunteers and with those who were commanded by Dr. Masi and Col. Galletti, on the assailants and defeated them, inflicting upon them severe losses, taking hundreds of prisoners, and scattering the others in flight (April 30, 1849).

The Austrian army on their part arrived at Bologna and began hostilities by attacking the Porta Galliera. The Bolognese repulsed the assault. The enemy put in action guns and mortars, with which they were abundantly provided and overwhelmed the "Learned City" with grape-shot projectiles and explosives. The Bolognese defended themselves valorously for several days. But by May 16,

1849, their strength was spent; they could no longer resist; they were obliged to surrender.

One week after, the Austrians attacked the city of Ancona from sea and land. This younger sister of Venice fought strenuously for about a month. But in the end she too capitulated (June 20). The Bourbon army (16,000 men), commanded by King Ferdinand himself, was in possession of Velletri near Rome. Garibaldi, at the head of only 3,000 volunteers, a part of whom were mere boys, rushed to attack it, forced it from the city, dispersed and pursued it as far as Arca (May 12-20).

The Spanish were landed at Fiumicino and Terracina. General Oudinot, with 40,000 soldiers and 36 cannon, on the evening of June 2d, recommenced hostilities against Rome. The Republic had no more than 9,000 volunteers at her command. But they were cavaliers of high ideals. Their minds were illuminated with the omnipresent thought of Mazzini. In their breasts beat the living heart of Garibaldi. The fight was long and bitter. It culminated the night of June 29th in a great battle. The defenders accomplished superhuman deeds. Among those who so nobly fell was the poet Goffredo Mameli, the youth of twenty-two years, who in his patriotic hymns voiced the emotions of the people and inspired them to fight for their liberties; and Luciano Manara, who was *the first among the first* in the five days of Milan. There fell also Enrico Dandolo, Emilio Morosini, and hundreds of other heroes. But such sacrifice was not sufficient to save the Republic.

Garibaldi was obliged to sheath his sword, and on July 3d he went from *Alma Roma*, sad, silent, poverty-stricken (so poor that for the mere necessities of life he was obliged to sell his watch), accompanied by his devoted consort, Anita, seven months advanced in pregnancy, and by about 4,000 other survivors, among whom was the Barnabite preacher Ugo Bassi and the Roman citizen Angelo Brunetti called *Ciceruacchio*, and to whom he had nothing to offer except hunger, cold, heat, and forced marches.

Mazzini also, and all of the other leaders of the glorious Republic were driven into exile.

On July 12th, Pius IX, escorted by the French and Austrians, re-entered the capital, abrogated the Constitution, annulled the reforms, filled the prisons with political prisoners, and humiliated both souls and bodies, meriting the judgment of Lord Clarendon, who said, "The government of priests is an opprobrium for civilized Europe."

XIV

The Austrian soldiers pursue Garibaldi and Anita (the loved consort of the Hero) who is pregnant. The sad ending of the heroine, who is buried nude! "The abandoned wandering dog" (1849).

Garibaldi, who succeeded in hiding himself and his army from the enemy which angrily pursued him, arrived in Tuscany and tried to incite the people to a revolution; but he found everyone discouraged and fearful. Then he cried to his volunteers, "There remains only Venice for us to die in!"

But how to arrive at the Lido was the problem. The long and fatiguing forced marches under the scorching sun; the ambushed bloodhounds of the tyrant which were let loose in every direction, added to hunger, thirst, and sorrow, reduced the survivors to only 1,500. And those who, notwithstanding these hardships, were animated by generous and patriotic sentiments, were not in condition to face a new Odyssey. Garibaldi led them to the little republic of San Marino, and there secured an armistice with the enemy in which he demanded and obtained the right to send his companions undisturbed to their homes. He, personally, would not bind himself to any pact with the Austrians; he preferred to keep the road to which fate had predestined him. But hundreds more daring and faithful wished to follow him at any cost. The Hero, who was as gentle as he was invincible, could not refuse them.

He accepted their offer and with them attempted to escape by way of the sea. But the fragile boat containing the

sacred handful was quickly overtaken by the Austrian hordes, who were on the lookout. Garibaldi with his courageous Anita jumped into the water, and being a proved swimmer was not long in reaching the shore, saving himself and his beloved consort. Ugo Bassi (the Barnabite preacher) and Angelo Brunetti (*Ciceruacchio*) and many other Garibaldians were captured and executed.

On August 4, 1849 — it was sunset — a little vehicle with one horse, driven by the Garibaldian captain Leggero, crept slowly up the road which led from the sea to the woods of Ravenna. In the rough cart was a young woman sick with a fever.

"Have courage!" said Garibaldi, who was dressed as a farmer and was sitting near the woman, caressing her forehead and holding above her head an open umbrella to prevent the burning rays of the sun from scorching her. "Courage, my good Anita. In that house yonder we will ask aid."

"O Giuseppe, I am dying!" murmured the invalid, while foam covered her burning lips.

The Hero wiped her mouth with a silk handkerchief. A black cloud closed over his soul. They finally reached the vicinity of the house. A farm hand looked with surprise at the strange company.

"In the name of humanity," cried Garibaldi supplicatingly, "save this woman! I ask nothing for myself, everything for her. Give us a glass of water. Let us rest a moment."

"I am not the master here," responded the rustic, "but I will call my master, Ravaglia."

A woman servant came out of the house. She, seeing that Anita was struck with death, was overcome with emotion and exclaimed: "Poor creature! To travel in such a condition! It is fortunate that we have a physician here."

Dr. Naldini came, looked anxiously at the invalid, and said sententiously, "This woman is dying." Then looking fixedly at Garibaldi, continued, "And you, with that face, with that beard, you are Garibaldi!"

"Silence, for pity's sake!" softly interrupted the Hero. "You know well that I am hunted to the death and all the

others who assist me are punished. Don't, don't reveal my name!"

At that moment Stefano Ravaglia, the master of the house, joined them. He told them to take Anita into the upper chamber where there was a poor little bed. With the greatest tenderness the Hero took the little creature in his powerful arms, and went slowly up the stairs. But, after a few steps, Anita's beautiful head fell back, and she said feebly: "Giuseppe . . . the children . . . " and she was dead!

The Hero replaced the adored figure on the ground; he touched it; he bathed it with tears; he covered it with kisses; he called her by the sweetest and most sacred names; he cried desperately: "No, no! she is not dead! Take her upstairs. It is a fainting spell. She has suffered so much, poor little creature! She will revive. She is strong. She is not dead, I say! It is impossible! If it were true, I too should be dead, because our lives have always been as one. Look at me, Anita . . . . open your eyes . . . . move your lips . . . . speak to me!"

All of those present wept. Captain Leggero bowed respectfully over his leader and whispered in his ear these supplicating words: "Rise! Save yourself,— for your children,— for Italy!"

"I am choking!" responded the Hero. "Give me a glass of water." He drank it; he arose; he turned and gave a last look full of infinite love and sorrow at the immobile form of the martyr, and turned away, sobbing like a child. He went to the door and stopped and offered a ring which he had taken from the finger of Anita (the only treasure which he possessed) to Ravaglia to compensate him for his hospitality and as a memento. "No," said the honest farmer, "keep it, it is sacred to you."

. . . . . .

On August 11, 1849, an abandoned dog, rummaging about, discovered a body which was buried in the shallow sands of Marina, in the parish of Mandriole. The authorities came and found that it was the body of a pregnant woman

"who had her hair clipped like a Puritan's and wore a skirt and a mantle." The clothes were removed and were displayed to help in the identification of the body. And the brave consort of the Hero of two worlds was reburied nude in the earth!

A few days after, a man of robust appearance, but with face pallid and sad, left the country of Modigliana.

That man was Garibaldi. Groups of Austrian soldiers, growling ostrogothic oaths and swearing vengeance, hunted him. At one point the Hero found himself in imminent danger, and took refuge in a near-by tavern. As soon as he was seated at a table, some Croatian soldiers noisily entered. "I am discovered!" he exclaimed to himself. But the Croatians did not recognize him. They went to a table, and ordered and drank wine without limit. They were soon drunk. They gesticulated wildly. They laughed idiotically. They repeated with drunken voices: "Ah, *Garibalda*, *Garibalda*, we'll find you yet — we'll catch you in a trap! Ha! ha! ha!"

The Hero jumped like a leopard toward the door, and fled to the fields. In vain the Croatians attempted to follow him: their drunken legs would not carry them. Their bodies fell to the ground and they wallowed like pigs in mire.

After countless difficulties he arrived finally at Nice, his native city, embraced his mother, who already had counted eighty-four years, kissed his children, wept with them for the loss of Anita, and with broken heart betook himself to exile, embarking on a ship which was going direct to Tunis. But the Bey refused to give him shelter, fearing to bring troubles on his own head. Then the Hero wandered from Maddalena[1] to Gibraltar, from Gibraltar to Tangiers; and finally one day took ship for New York, where he was given brotherly care by an Italian, Antonio Meucci, the defrauded inventor of the telephone which today is called the Bell.

[1]The largest island in the strait of Bonifacio (Sardinia).

XV

The Austrians besiege and bombard Venice, continuously, for three months. Field Marshal Radetzky apes Nero. The Queen of the Adriatic Sea is obliged to surrender, because of famine and cholera more than because of the army of the enemy. The elegy of the poet (1849).

Forty thousand Austrians, with 150 pieces of artillery, besieged Venice by sea and by land. On May 24, 1849, they began to storm it with bombs and burning rockets.

Field Marshal Radetzky, wishing to ape Emperor Nero, of execrated memory, invited several archdukes from his own country to witness the spectacle of the Italian city struck in every part with fire and with death. Puerile old barbarian!

The Venetians did not lose their courage. On the contrary, they felt themselves physically and morally stronger than before. They were wisely guided by the Doge Daniele Manin, and the brave General Guglielmo Pepe, who presented a formidable resistance to the unheard-of cruelty of the enemy.

The fight lasted long. It was intense, bloody. Victory smiled several times on the besieged. It would have been also their final triumph if, aside from the scarcity of arms and munitions, and of the almost absolute lack of food, the cholera had not overtaken them. The terrible scourge, which was not checked by necessary scientific means, and was favored by little and bad food, began to decimate the women and children especially.

On August 15th, the *Sanitary Bulletin* published 402 cases with 272 deaths. One week later the unconquerable pest, augmented by hunger, which was always on the increase, and by the Austrian artillery ever more intense, transformed the charming city of the Doges into a Dante-like inferno. The defenders, oppressed by sorrow for the miserable ending of their beloved dead, lost all courage and hope.

During the making of the treaty (August 23, 1849) Venice was immersed in a sepulchered gloom.

The poet Arnaldo Fusinato, who was made guardian of the island of the Lazzaretto, wrote with a breaking heart the following elegiac verses:

The air is gloom,
The heavens are still;
Alone on the terrace,
I mourn, I weep for thee,
Venice mine!

The rays of the dying sun
Disappear
In the broken clouds
Of the West;
And the last sigh
Of the Lagoon
Breathes sadly
In the twilight air.

A gondola from the city passes:
—Ohè! Gondolier,
What news?
—The pestilence rages,
We lack bread,
On the bridge waves
The white flag!

Venice! thine
Hour has come;
Glorious martyr,
Thou art lost!
The pestilence rages,
We lack bread,
On the bridge waves
The white flag.

But not the cannons
Belching fire,
Nor the crashing thunders
That roll above thee,
Have had the power
To stifle thy liberty.

Long live Venice!
She dies only from starvation.

O history! register
On thy pages
The iniquities of thine enemy,
And the glories of our Patria;
And cry to posterity—
Be three times cursèd he
Who would see Venice
Die of starvation!

Long live Venice!
Her ancient virtues
Have been roused
By the ire of the enemy;
But the pestilence rages,
And she lacks bread,
On the bridge waves
The white flag.

And now this my lyre,
Which is as yet free,
I break here
On the stones.
And to thee, Venice,
My last song,
My last kiss,
My last tear!

I go wandering
In strange lands,
But thou, Venice, wilt live
In my thought;
Thou wilt live
Here in my heart
As the image
Of my first love.

But the wind whistles,
Dark are the waves;
Nature
Is all in obscurity;

The chords scream.
The voice is spent.
On the bridge waves
The white flag.

On August 24, 1849, the holocaust was complete. The glorious Queen of the Adriatic was again in the clutch of the rapacious two-headed eagle. Manin, Tommaséo, Guglielmo Pepe, and other prominent patriots were obliged to take English and French ships and, like Mazzini, to follow the sad road of exile.

XVI

Field Marshal Radetzky and his graceless officers celebrate the birthday of their Emperor (Francis Joseph) in Milan by hectoring the unarmed people, brutally charging upon them with cavalry and infantry, beating patriots and whipping the young boys and girls on their bare backs (1849).

While Venice agonized, Radetzky committed new infamies in Milan. He provoked the citizens in order that he might afterward punish them.

It will suffice, however, to give the following episodes:

August 18, 1849, was the nineteenth birthday of the Emperor Francis Joseph and the old marshal, wishing to celebrate it with noisy demonstrations, ordered the firing of several volleys of guns at dawn; the decoration of the balconies, of the windows, of the public squares, and of the streets with festoons of Austrian colors; a solemn religious ceremony with the singing of the *Te Deum* in the Duomo; a pompous military parade and, for the evening, "a spontaneous illumination under threat of judicial prosecution against the recalcitrants."

Now, what happened in spite of the astuteness of the all-powerful Austrian officialdom which was organized for provocations?

At that time in the square of the Duomo was the Café

Mazza, one of the most frequented in the city. Opposite it lived a certain woman of bad repute, a favorite of many Austrian officials who met day and night in front of the café and also inside to feast and revel and to insult peaceful citizens as they passed by. At the order of some of her devoted officer-friends, the woman had prepared a great drapery with the imperial colors and the emblem of Austria embroidered on it and on the anniversary hung it from the balcony of her house.

The Austrian officials — drinking, smoking, chattering before the Café Mazza, congratulated the woman, who remained boldly on the balcony, making all sorts of obscene grimaces to her which she mistook for gracious smiles, while at the same time with certain characteristic laughs they ridiculed and provoked the passersby.

In a flash, the square of the Duomo was full of people. Someone whistled, a hundred whistled, there was a cry, a hundred cried out indignant imprecations, then showering her with tri-colored rosettes they forced the woman to reenter her house, taking with her the hated drapery.

The Austrian officers seemed to be expecting nothing less than this. They jumped into the street, grinding their teeth. They opened a way for themselves with lashes from their switches, they called the woman to the balcony, they invited her to replace the drapery, and when she complied the ruffians broke into frantic applause. The indignation and fury of the crowd increased.

Then a squadron of cavalry arrived with drawn sabres and a corps of infantry with fixed bayonets. They charged upon the unarmed crowd without regard for the old men, women or children.

The officers planted themselves on the sidewalks brandishing switches above their heads, threatening and howling like so many obsessed demons, forced the fugitives to take off their hats and to salute the drapery; then they snatched the woman up, took her along with the drapery in a carriage, and carried her in triumph through the city. As if this were not enough, they made numberless arrests of both men and women, accusing them of anti-political and

scandalous demonstrations, and of insults to the *emblem of His Majesty*, etc.

On August 22d, in the Piazza Castello, fifteen patriots (students, property owners, merchants, shopkeepers, and simple workmen) from 21 to 50 years of age, were subjected to the humiliation of a public whipping. They were tied with their breasts to planks, bare from their heads to their waists and received on their backs, some thirty, some forty, and some fifty strokes from switches.

Three youths (Luciano Ferrandi, 17 years old, bookbinder; Giacomo Trezzi, 17 years old, tanner; Giacobbe Colombo, 19 years old, jeweler), who were not considered strong enough by the army physician to endure the beating, received, the first thirty lashes, and the other two forty lashes each. The victims were given over to a soldier who was in charge of the galleys.

Two young girls, Maria Conti, a Florentine, 18 years of age, and Ernesta Galli, from Cremona, 20 years old, whose honor the profligate Austrian officers had many times in vain tried to corrupt, privately endured atrocious punishment, receiving on their bare backs, the first, thirty and the second, forty strokes from the whips.[1]

Fourteen other patriots were thrown into prison in irons, and fed only on bread and water. A few days later the Austrian director of the castle had the insolence to send a bill to the city council "for the expense incurred in buying canes and switches, vinegar and ice used on the bodies of the victims, and demanded to be reimbursed."

It was thus that the despicable Radetzky celebrated in Italy the birthday of his master the Emperor Francis Joseph!

Such opprobrium shook the whole of Europe. The journals, especially the *London Times*, published fiery articles against the Austrian government. And the poet Francesco Dall'Ongaro wrote:

Lombardians, Venetians, Italians all, forget your glories, your hopes, your disillusions, your political errors; but remember, re-

[1] The switches, cut from filbert trees, were as thick as the thumb and were bound to the wrist by a leather thong in order to give greater force to the blows. One of these switches may be seen in the Museum of the Risorgimento in Milan.

member this day, write it on the walls of your houses, in the public squares, in the churches, on the covers of your books, everywhere. Whoever could forget it is a coward! Through the thirty-four martyrs Italy herself was beaten, was shamed, was dishonored. And Italy knows this well.

XVII

"The Emperor of Hangmen" (1851–1853).

Lombardo-Veneto again fell into the claws of the Austrians, and the people paid for their patriotism by having imposed upon them tributes, hectorings and torments. But no force, however militarily brutal, could repress in the Italians their innate, traditional, and ever-growing desire for liberty.

Giuseppe Mazzini from London, aided by Saffi and other eminent exiles, incited a new struggle for their oppressed brothers. In consequence, there sprang up everywhere secret and revolutionary societies and committees.

Naturally, the Austrian police were on the alert; they spied upon the societies, discovered and punished them. In 1851 for example, they arrested a Milanese workman, Antonio Sciesa on the charge of having conspired with numerous other patriots against the dominating government.

The accused was invited with flattering unctuousness to reveal the names of his accomplices. He rejected the invitation. He was threatened; he was maltreated; he was subjected to the "third degree." He endured every barbarity with heroic patience. He was condemned to death. He listened to the sentence with firm and dignified demeanor. He was offered grace if he would confess. He refused it. He was conducted in chains to the neighborhood of his own home in the hope that the sight of his family would weaken him, would make him cling to life, would induce him to talk. He said only two simple dialect words: "Pull on!" He was dragged to the gallows, where he faced quietly and unflinchingly the extreme penalty of the law.

During 1852 and 1853, on the bastions of Belfiore (Mantua) the Austrian gibbet cut short the lives of other

patriots: Enrico Tazzoli and Giovanni Grioli, priests; Carlo Poma, physician; Giovanni Zambelli, artist; the Venetian, Angelo Scartellini; the writer, Bernardo De Canal, the Brescian Tito Speri, scholar and poet; Bartolomeo Grazioli, priest; Count Carlo Montanari from Verona; Pietro Domenico Frattini from Legnano; Col. Pietro Fortunato Calvi from Briana of Modale (Venice).

The indignation resulting from such injustice was beyond bounds. The Emperor Francis Joseph received the ugly pseudonym of "The Emperor of Hangmen," and even to this day the Italians repeat it with maledictions and hate.

Not less cruel were the smaller tyrants who were obedient to Austria. It suffices to say that Charles III, who succeeded Charles II in the Duchy of Parma, caused three hundred citizens to be beaten to death in only four months. In the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies such well-known and esteemed patriots as the scholar, Luigi Settembrini; the philosopher, Raffaele Conforti, the economist, Antonio Scialoia, the jurist, Giuseppe Pisanelli; the statesman, Silvio Spaventa, Carlo Poerio, Nicola Nisco, Pironti, Saliceti and others, were treated so villainously as to move the whole of Europe to scorn. It was just at that time that Gladstone characterized the Bourbon government in Italy as "The negation of God constructed into a system."

In short, from the snowy Alps to the Island of the Sun, one could see nothing but a people anxious for liberty martyrized by Austria and by arrogant, avid and sanguinary little despots whom Austria counseled, incited and protected.

A similar state of things continued for many years. It might have lasted an interminable time, if unlooked-for events had not supervened to moderate it and to hurry, at the same time, the unity of the nation and the independence for which the Italians had fought and suffered for centuries.

XVIII

The Bersaglieri in the Crimean War (1855). Cavour at the Congress of Paris (1856). The Alliance with Napoleon III (1858). The memorable words of Victor Emanuel II at the opening of the Sub-Alpine Parliament. Austria's ultimatum to Piedmont. The Hymn of Garibaldi. The Austrian soldiers massacre the family of Cignoli. The papal soldiers massacre the patriots of Perugia. Pius IX and Cardinal Pecci (later Pope Leo XIII) praise the assassination. The third War of Liberation won by the Italians with the aid of the French (1859).

Nicholas I of Russia, in 1854, pretending to liberate the Christian people of the Danube from Ottoman domination, made war upon Turkey.

But France and England, who knew well the secret ends of the Czar, which were to conquer Constantinople, believed that it was necessary for the protection of their military and commercial interests, to oppose the desired conquest; therefore, they defended the Turk.

Camillo Benso di Cavour, with his rare political discernment, foresaw in the above events a fortunate opportunity for Italy; foresaw a benefit which might come to the Italians if they were to enter into the war of the Orient; he took advantage of the occasion; he did everything possible to accord with the Allies, and sent to the Crimea an army of 15,000 men in the greater part made up of Bersaglieri, commanded by General Alfonso Lamarmora.

At Cernaia the Italian soldiers did honor to themselves. Among other things, on August 16, 1855, they saved the armies of the allies from a dangerous surprise, resisting an attack from 60,000 Russian soldiers. And on September 8th they covered themselves with glory, fighting under the rain of the enemies' fire while taking the tower of Malakoff, which was the principal bulwark of Sebastopol.

The Russians were beaten. In the congress held in Paris some time afterward, Cavour was able to command a hearing as an official representative of Piedmont, notwithstanding the opposition and intrigues of Austria. At the memorable meeting of March 30, 1856, the sagacious minister of Victor Emanuel II brought before them for discussion the "Italian Question," denouncing with frank and ringing words the preponderance of Austrians in Italy, which was the cause of so much evil, and insisting that it was the duty of the Great Powers who were arbitrating the destiny of Europe, to take the part of a people who asked for nothing but their own national unity and freedom from any outside tyranny. The Austrian representative, puffing up and turning red as a turkey, made his protest. The other representatives, however, expressed their sympathy for the cause defended by Cavour, and notwithstanding the fact that the Congress dissolved without formulating any concrete resolution regarding Italy, France and England, it did not fail to criticize and advise Austria and the tyrants of Italy whom she protected — such as the Pope, the Bourbon King, and the other minor ones — that it demanded the betterment of conditions which the leaders of liberal ideas considered indispensable to their well-being.

More than this, Napoleon III began to think on his own account of putting down Austria. It seemed to him that the Italian people might contribute to such a plan. Accordingly, during the summer of 1858, he had a secret meeting with Cavour at Plombières in the Vosges, and there they formulated a plan for a Franco-Piedmontese alliance in which the allies pledged themselves to combine against Austria if she provoked them to war and in case of victory to annex Lombardo-Veneto to Piedmont.

After the military victories in Russia, this diplomatic success reawakened hope and joy in the hearts of Italians. The eyes of the nation turned anxiously toward the Piedmontese government. The leaders of the patriots incited Piedmont to action by means of the press and public and private exhortations. Francis Joseph could not endure this. He commanded Victor Emanuel II to bridle the press and the

tongues of the orators. The humble King of Piedmont, counseled by Cavour, refused to obey the command of the powerful Emperor of Austria. Not only that, but in the solemn opening of the Sub-Alpine parliament (January, 1859) during the pragmatic speech of the crown, he proffered the following historic and significant words:

Our Country, small in territory, has acquired importance in the councils of Europe, because of the greatness of the ideas which she represents and for the sympathy which she inspires. This condition, however, is not free from danger, because while we respect the treaties we are not insensible to the cries of suffering which come to us from every part of Italy. We look forward to harmony for we are confident of our own rights, and we will await prudently and patiently the decree of Divine Providence.

The assembly burst into frantic applause. An enthusiasm for war ran through the entire peninsula. Men of all ages and from every social condition eagerly enlisted in the regular Piedmontese army, or under Garibaldi, who was again in Italy and was authorized by the government of Victor Emanuel II to form and command a corps of volunteers called *The Alpine Hunters*.

Austria, fuming with rage, imposed on Piedmont a menacing dilemma: to disarm the soldiers and send the volunteers to their homes within three days, or — WAR.

The Piedmontese did not hesitate in their decision.

They chose WAR. A divine exultation seemed to spread among the people from the mountains to the sea; it transformed and almost reshaped the national conscience, it hardened and made steel-like their wrists, and everywhere under the beautiful sky of the new-born spring could be heard the martial strains of the *Hymn of Garibaldi*, written by the poet Luigi Mercantini, and set to music by the maestro Alessio Olivieri:

Garibaldi's War Hymn[1]

To arms, men! To arms, men!
The graves loose their captives; arise our departed;
Our martyrs come forth, all our heroes great-hearted,

[1] By permission of Oliver Ditson Company.

With sabre in hand, and their brows crown'd with laurel,
The fame and the name of Italia their star!
Make haste, oh, make haste! Forward, gallant battalions!
Fling out to the winds flags for all, ye Italians,
Rise, all with your weapons! Rise, all fire-impassion'd!
Rise, all fire-impassion'd, Italians ye are!
Depart from our homeland, Depart, O ye strangers!
This hour gives the signal; betake you afar.

The land famed for flowers, for poets, for singing,
Once more be a land where the sword blows are ringing!
Our hands may be bound with a hundred harsh fetters
But still they can brandish Legnano's[1] bright swords.
The Austrian staff no Italian belabors;
The race born of Rome do not jest with their sabres;
No longer will Italy put up with her tyrants;
Too many long years have we harbor'd their hordes!
Depart from our homeland, Depart, O ye strangers!
This hour gives the signal; betake you afar.

For us are the dwellings of Italy fashion'd,
While yours on the Danube must henceforth be station'd,
You've ravaged our fields, aye, our bread you have stolen;
Our sons for ourselves we desire to enroll.
The Alps with the two seas mark Italy's borders;
Our fire blazing chariots shall mow down the warders;
All signs of the former frontiers shall be cancell'd!
One banner alone let us raise o'er the whole!
Depart from our homeland, Depart, O ye strangers!
This hour gives the signal; betake you afar.

Let voices be silent, let each arm be ready!
Let's face to the foe, let us march firm and steady!
And then in a moment the Austrian will flee us.
One thought in our hearts for our homeland shall flame!
Our eyes are not fix'd upon barbarous plunder;
Great princes from robbers no jealousies sunder;
The natives of Italy form but one nation;
Her famed hundred cities are one but in name!
Depart from our homeland, Depart, O ye strangers!
This hour gives the signal; betake you afar.[2]

[1] A celebrated victory of the *Lombard League* over Barbarossa, May 29, 1176.

[2] I do not repeat here the last four strophes of the Hymn of Garibaldi because they were written by Mercantini in 1860, following the events of Sicily and Naples, which will be briefly narrated in the next chapter.

On April 29, 1859, a great Austrian army invaded Lombardy and Novarese, which the Italian army had abandoned for strategic reasons. After the usual brigand-like violence had been committed against the property owners and unarmed people, the Austrian army advanced toward Vercellese, with the intention of occupying Turin, after which they expected to push on to Mont Cenis Pass to stop the advance of the French. But the Italian trenches constructed near the river Dora arrested the march of the enemy; their plans were turned upside down, and the French were thus able to go on without meeting the slightest obstacle, not only from Mont Cenis, but also from Mongi-nevro and from Genoa.

The war now entered into a new phase. The Italians, under the absolute command of Victor Emanuel II, had in all 80,000 men. The French, under the command of Napoleon III, had 200,000. And the Austrians, under the command of Marshal Guilay, had 300,000.

At Montebello, on the right bank of the Po, to the east of Voghera, was the first notable encounter between 22,000 allies and 30,000 Austrians. The latter were defeated and obliged to retire to the opposite bank of the river (May 20, 1859).

The same day they revenged themselves by massacring an entire Italian family. Cavour, in a special circular, which he sent to all parts of the country, narrates this outrage as follows:

The 20th of May, 1859, several Austrian troops camped on the hill of Torricella, a little city of the Vogherese. A group of these arrested the custodian of the court house, whom they encountered on the way, and compelled him to lead them. They entered the house of a farmer named Cignoli. After searching about in every part of the house, they discovered a little flask containing some bird-shot, and for this they drove every member of the family out, and also some farmers who happened to be in the house. They were taken to the Austrian commander who was on his horse. After he had exchanged some words with a corporal, he ordered the prisoners (there were nine) to go down into a little by-way, which ran parallel to the wider road. The poor unfortunates had taken but a few steps when the commander gave the signal to the

soldiers to shoot them. Eight fell dead; old Cignoli was mortally wounded. Then the Austrians continued on their way in the direction of Casteggio; and the commander turned to the custodian of the court house, released him and gave him as a reward for his services a safe conduct on which was signed the name of *Lieutenant-Marshal Urban.* Old Cignoli died five days after in the hospital of Voghera. Such enormities have no need of comment. They are too atrocious, too cowardly, and worthy only of barbarians and savages!

The indignation in Italy was great.

Guerrazzi wrote:

Let the tomb of the Cignoli be of stone, high and wide as a pyramid, of a single piece of granite. Let it be placed exactly on the spot where the Cignoli were so atrociously and cowardly murdered. Let their ashes be gathered under it. On the western side, let there be placed this inscription: *Tomb of the Cignoli!* On the east side: *An entire family massacred by a whole people, here vengeance cries to a just God against the Austrian assassins!* On the north side let there be cut the names and ages of the victims. On the south side let there be placed this inscription: *Between Italians and Austrians, through all time and in every place, let there be a pact of the grave and a truce of death.*

And Niccolini wrote a sonnet, in which he said among other things to the Emperor Francis Joseph:

When you were born the sun hid his face,
Every benignant light on earth was extinguished,
The Danube and other streams ran blood,
Every mother strained her child to her breast.

When you die — the sun will be brighter,
Mothers and wives will dance alternately
On the tombs of these cowardly flagellants.

Garibaldi, however, with his sturdy volunteers, defeated the Austrians at Arona, at Varese, at Como, and in several other places (May 25th, 26th, and 27th). The regular Italian army, assisted by the French, defeated them at Palestro, on May 29th.

About the first of June, there was fought on the plains

of Magenta one of the most obstinate and bloody battles of the campaign. The French, commanded by General MacMahon, were 125,000 strong. The Italians were few (having only some divisions). The Austrians, commanded by Guilay, were superior in numbers to the allies. The battle began at five in the morning and ended at seven o'clock on the evening of June 4th. The Austrians were beaten and obliged to fly precipitately, leaving on the ground 12,000 wounded and dead, and losing 6,000 prisoners.

Garibaldi, on his own account, carried victory before him to the shores of Lake Garda.

The city of Milan, evacuated by her hated oppressors, as was the rest of Lombardy, again proclaimed her annexation to Piedmont. And Victor Emanuel II, with Napoleon III and the army of the allies, triumphantly entered the superb metropolis (June 8th).

Umbria and the Marches, then under the papal rule, rebelled in order to unite in the national movement. But they were overcome by the papal army, which was composed of a mass of strangers, bigots and reactionaries, commanded by General Lamoricière, who was an exile from France. At Perugia the Italian patriots had formed a provisional government. The papal soldiers prepared themselves to crush it. The members of the provisional government presented themselves to the archbishop of the city, Cardinal Gioacchino Pecci (later Pope Leo XIII) and begged of him to interpose his influence to prevent further bloodshed. But Cardinal Pecci would not listen to the supplications of the Italian patriots. Consequently, General Schmid, a commander of the papal soldiers, could massacre without distinction and at his convenience, men, women, old people and children. Pope Pius IX promoted Schmid to a generalship; and Cardinal Pecci (later Pope Leo XIII) offered to God a solemn high mass in honor and in memory of the papal soldiers fallen in that battle of brigands.

For such infamies Cavour sent a protest to all of the governments of Europe.

The enemy was reduced to a pitiful condition. Marshal

Guilay was removed from his command and General Hess was substituted in his place. Francis Joseph himself went to the field of battle to restore by his presence the morale of his demoralized troops.

On June 24, 1859, the Austrians (200,000 strong and with 700 cannon) boldly occupied the hills of San Martino and Solferino, near Mantua, and determined to regain their lost ground.

The allies, ready to face them, were not more than 160,000 in all. The French army were to take their position against Solferino and the Italians against San Martino. The engagement took place at seven in the morning. They fought with savage fury and stubbornness until nine o'clock in the evening. The Austrians were defeated. More than 20,000 fell.

It was the beginning of the end for the tyrants. It was the aurora of redemption for the oppressed Italians. They sang hymns to victory. They fraternized with the French. They exalted the gentle Latin blood.

But suddenly Napoleon III, who had hitherto showed himself so daring and generous, changed his ideas for personal and political reasons. He accepted the proposal of an armistice, and met Francis Joseph at Villafranca (July 11–12, 1859). There the two Emperors agreed upon the preliminaries of peace, which were solemnly ratified at Zurich, November 10th. Its basis was that Francis Joseph should cede Lombardy to Napoleon, and Napoleon on his part should cede it to Victor Emanuel II (what hypocritical formality!). Venice should be left to Austria. The deposed princes could return each to his own dominion. But they might be recalled by a vote of the people and without the armed intervention of strangers. The peninsula, including Venice, must be made a confederation with the Pope as its head.

One can imagine the sorrowful effect produced by this ignominious action of Napoleon III, who was even accused of treason.

But hope was not entirely lost. The fortunate clause, however, of the *non-intervention of strangers* put into the

hands of the Italians themselves the unity of their country. The regions of Emilia and Tuscany were not tardy in profiting by it, declaring by popular vote their annexation to Piedmont, which thus became a Kingdom of 12,000,000 souls.

The government of Victor Emanuel II was obliged to cede Savoy and Nice to France; Nice, a most Italian city, the birthplace of Garibaldi.

XIX

Garibaldi and The Thousand gloriously conquer the Two Sicilies (1860). Proclamation of the Kingdom of Italy. (1861). The Fourth War of Liberation against Austria is lost owing to the inefficiency of commanders. The annexation of Veneto (1866). Villa Glori. The hired soldiers of Pius IX massacre the Roman heroine Giuditta Arquati-Tavani with her husband and son. Mentana (1867). The taking of Rome and the final fall of the temporal power of the Popes (1870). The Nation one and independent.

The events which took place in Northern Italy were repeated in the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, where the tyranny of the Bourbon, Francis II, raged. He was weak-minded and almost idiotic, was called *Franceschiello.*[1] He was allied and related to the dynasty of Austria. (Francis II married Maria Sophia of Bavaria, sister of the Empress Elizabeth, wife of Francis Joseph). He was opposed to the independence of Italy and was a fierce persecutor of the liberals.

Palermo rose up against him (April 1, 1860). The alarm was sounded in the hope that all of Sicily would rise. Instead, the troops intervened and repressed with Bourbon violence the revolution in the city. The news of the insurrection quickly reached Genoa and reawakened the spirits of the patriots of the south who had taken refuge

[1] Francis the *Little.*

there. A wave of sympathy for their brothers, who had risen up in rebellion in Sicily, animated them. They determined to fly to their rescue as soon as possible.

On May 6, 1860, two ships, the *Lombardo* and the *Piedmont*, having on board the thousand argonauts of liberty, led by Giuseppe Garibaldi, weighed anchor from the rocks of Quarto, the smiling little village on the shore of Liguria.

They landed at Marsala on May 11th. The captain immediately invited the Sicilians to arm themselves against the Bourbon oppressors and to fight for the unity and independence of their country.

The cry of the Hero was received with the greatest enthusiasm by the ardent islanders, and *The Thousand* was quickly increased.

On May 15th, the Garibaldians encountered the Bourbon army on the hills of Calatafimi and engaged in a fierce battle with them. At a certain point it seemed that the volunteers must be routed by their enemies, who were greatly superior in numbers. Nino Bixio (the first officer of *The Thousand* after Garibaldi), who commanded the right wing, came to Garibaldi and said: "It would be better to retreat."

"What are you saying, Bixio?" Garibaldi responded energetically. "Here we must confirm the unity of Italy or die!" And rushing to the front with his sword on high, he commanded: "To your bayonets!"

The enemy was dispersed.[1]

From Calatafimi Garibaldi marched on to Palermo and entered the city as Dictator (May 26–29, 1860).

On July 27th, the enemy was defeated also at Milazzo in a terrible encounter in which this same Garibaldi fought hand to hand with the enemy.

In less than three months the Bourbon troops were obliged to abandon Sicily.

At dawn on August 20th, Garibaldi landed in Calabria with his volunteers, rushed upon Reggio and again defeated the enemy.

[1] "Calatafimi! What remains after one hundred battles: if when my last hour comes my friends see me smile with pride, it will be because I am reminded of thee: because I do not recall a more glorious day of my life!" Thus Garibaldi wrote in his *Memoirs*.

So many victories produced a delirium of enthusiasm and love for the Hero and impelled the sturdy Calabrians also to rise in rebellion against the royalists.

After a time, on the hills of Soveria, near Catanzaro, Garibaldi gave to history the following memorable words:

"Say to the world that with a few hundreds of my valiant Calabrians, I made twelve thousand Bourbons lay down their arms."

Francis II, terrorized by what had befallen, fled from Naples on September 6th, and repaired to Gaeta, while the greater number of his troops who remained faithful to him took refuge in Capua.

The day after (September 7th), Garibaldi triumphantly re-entered the city of Naples and on October 2d, he again defeated the Bourbon army of 55,000 men near the river Volturno.

Umbria and the Marches also rebelled, proclaiming their annexation to Piedmont. The papal government in every way thwarted the will of the people who were still under its subjection. They offered themselves to Victor Emanuel II with a goodly number of troops and defeated the papal soldiers all along the line (September, 1860).

Soon after, the son of Carlo Alberto continued on his way to Naples to take possession of the kingdom which had been conquered by the Hero of two worlds.

On October 26th, Garibaldi and Victor Emanuel II, both on horseback, met on the road to Teano. An eye-witness to the scene attests to the fact that the Hero, giving Victor Emanuel II the military salute, shouted, "My salutation to the first king of Italy!"

It is certain that Victor Emanuel II, when he reached Naples, was greeted with great honor.

The Hero, on his part, after he had "presented an unexpected realm to the king" returned poorer than ever to his little island of Caprera.

After the annexation of the Two Sicilies, of Umbria and the Marches, the Sub-Alpine Parliament was dissolved, and there was a new general election in which all parts of Italy were included, except Veneto, which as yet remained under

the dominion of Austria, and the city of Rome which still remained under the dominion of the Pope.

The first Italian Parliament was solemnly opened at Turin in the month of February 1861. There the formation of the Kingdom of Italy was proclaimed, conferring upon Victor Emanuel II the right to assume for himself and for his successors the title of King of Italy and expressing thereby the hope that "Rome should again be restored as the capital of Italy."

In 1866 Austria and Prussia disputed between themselves as to which should have the supremacy in Germany. As they could not arrive at a pacific conclusion by good means, they had recourse to arms.

Victor Emanuel II made a secret alliance, both offensive and defensive, with Prussia with the intention of acquiring Venice.

Prussia, conforming to the stipulated treaty, was the first to open hostilities against Austria by invading Holstein.

Victor Emanuel II followed, declaring war against the common enemy, June 19, 1866, and on the 21st he took his departure for the field of battle.

On June 24th, he went to battle against the Austrians at Custozza. The Italians fought with their usual fury; but they lost the battle owing to the incapacity of their commanders.

They suffered a harder blow at sea. Near Lissa — a little island in the Adriatic — the Italian fleet engaged in a sharp battle against the Austrians. The Italian crews fought valiantly. The captains, Foà di Bruno and Alfredo Cappellini, commanders of the battleships *Re d'Italia* and *Palestro*, went stoically to the bottom with their ships. But their heroic sacrifice was not sufficient to save the situation. The stupidity and cowardice of Admiral Persano gave the victory to the Austrians (July 20, 1866).

Garibaldi, who had advanced to Trentino, conquering every foe on his way, was prepared to assault and to take the city of Trent. On July 25th, he suddenly received the following telegram from the government of Victor Emanuel II: "Armistice signed. Evacuate Trentino."

Evacuate Trentino after it had been bathed in the blood of 3,400 Garibaldians! After the populace had rallied around the flaming red shirts with manifestations of joy! After the disaster of Custozza! After the shame of Lissa!

From the camps there went up a roar of protest. The wounded tore off their bandages, crying that they preferred death to retreat. The volunteers remained in columns breaking their swords and bayonets; others rolled on the ground in their fury and desperation, weeping and cursing.

The victorious Hero said nothing. He telegraphed to the King of Italy only one word "Obbedisco" (I obey). But what eloquence, what grief, and what self-abnegation in that word!

Austria had been terribly defeated by the Prussians at Sadowa on July 3, 1866, and had lost every hope of predominance over Germany.

Francis Joseph was constrained to cede Veneto, but not directly to Italy, which he hated. He gave it to Napoleon III who in turn gave it to Italy; the repetition of the farce of 1859.

Thus, on November 1st, Veneto, after long years of wicked Austrian domination, was officially annexed to the Kingdom of Italy, with her boundaries limited on one side by the Isonzo River.

After the annexation of Veneto, the Italians were more than ever determined to retake Rome.

Garibaldi was the luminous center from which radiated and on which converged the national agitation for Rome. He pondered long on the means for liberating the Eternal City: liberation which was opposed by the government of Napoleon III and also by the Government of Victor Emanuel II.

In a trip through Italy the Hero was greeted with acclamation everywhere. He exhorted the people to the supreme necessity of liberating Rome. While he was on his way to the boundaries of the papal states (September 23, 1867) he was "arrested" by order of the Government of Savoy and conducted to Alessandria (Piedmont).

Great was the indignation of the Italians. To placate

them, the Government of Savoy was obliged to bring the Hero back to Caprera "nominally free, but the island was under the surveillance of various battleships."

After a few days, Garibaldi, with miraculous daring, was able to escape and went directly toward the Agro Romano, where his gallant volunteers had begun the war against the Pope.

In the meantime, the Roman people planned another uprising; but they were without arms. The Cairoli brothers and other generous souls (seventy-five in all) planned to carry munitions to the patriots.

On October 20, 1867, they passed the boundaries of the Roman state, and took boat on the Tiber, carrying with them rifles, swords and munitions. But they were informed on the way that the insurrection of the day before had resulted badly. Enrico Cairoli, head of the daring expedition, led his men into the dairy farm of Villa Glori, situated at a little distance from Porta del Popolo. There they were assailed in a short time by 500 papal soldiers. The battle was a bitter hand to hand conflict, the volunteers crying, "Long live Garibaldi! Long live Rome!" They fought like true heroes. Enrico Cairoli fell, covered with wounds. Other brave heroes also fell. But the papal soldiers were defeated (October 23).

The Roman patriots, notwithstanding all of their adversities and the lack of arms, persisted in their determination to make every effort to liberate their city from papal tyranny. The same day, October 23d, forty of them met secretly in Giulio Ajani's woolen shop, situated in Trastevere, and there took council together and made new plans for the revolution.

The Signora Giuditta Arquati-Tavani, whose son and husband were among the forty, wished to remain with them on the pretext of overseeing their food. She was still young, with a majestic beauty like that of the ancient Roman matrons.

While the patriots were meeting and making their plans, suddenly a company of gendarmes on horseback and a battalion of pontifical zouaves appeared running toward the shop.

The patriots quickly closed the doors and prepared to defend themselves. Then the first shots were heard. The papal soldiers better to take the offensive, went into a nearby convent and from the windows and from the high bell tower began to batter the shop. The Roman patriots responded from every window and opening of the house. Giuditta Arquati-Tavani ran from one room to the other carrying ammunition to the combatants, encouraging them and helping the wounded. The patriots, comforted by her calm heroism, regained their courage.

The 300 papal soldiers, who had made the first attack, were defeated after two hours of fighting. They had almost decided to abandon the fight when 300 other papal reinforcements arrived. The battle recommenced with greater force. The brave Giuditta pressed her husband's hand and kissed the hair of her boy, while handing them the rifles which she herself had loaded. She filled everyone with courage, exclaiming, "Long live Italy! Long live Rome!" "Don't let us yield to these assassins!" The patriots, exalted by the bravery of this wonderful woman, held at bay these 600 troopers as they had held the first 300, and more than once repulsed them.

But other papal reinforcements came, while the patriots were rapidly spending their munitions. Then the firing of the defenders stopped. The zouaves battered down the doors and rushed in. They fought on the stairs, on the loggias and in the halls. But the fight was too unequal. It could not continue long. The papal mercenaries massacred the patriots, "by crushing their heads, breaking their bones and throwing their bodies out into the courtyard."

Giuditta fell wounded by several rifle shots, but she dragged herself a little distance to where her husband and son lay wounded. Under the eyes of this invincible woman the soldiers transfixed them both one after the other with such violence that the bayonets passed through the bodies of the two men and were driven into the wall and the floor. Then attacking the heroine (who was six months advanced in pregnancy) they beat her to death with their rifles.

Finally, satiated with blood, they seated themselves

at the table which Giuditta Arquati-Tavani had prepared for her unfortunate companions, gorged themselves with food, and drank themselves stupid with wine.

Two days after (October 25, 1867), Garibaldi avenged these martyrs of Ajani's woolen shop by defeating the papal mercenaries at Monte Rotondo. But on November 3d, the Hero was overpowered by an extraordinary number of papal and French soldiers at Mentana, near Rome, after a titanic battle, and was obliged to retreat. Only a strategist of highest order could have accomplished such a retreat, and the defeat of Mentana has been judged more glorious than all of the victories won by Garibaldi during his adventurous career.

> There arose in Mentana the shame of the centuries
> From the wicked embrace of Peter[1] and Caesar[2]:
> You, Garibaldi, in Mentana
> On Peter and Caesar have planted your feet.
>
> (*Carducci*)

On September 20, 1870, the Italian soldiers under the command of General Raffaele Cadorna assaulted Rome, made a breach in the wall between Porta Pia and Porta Salaria, and entered the city.

Thus after more than a thousand years the power of the Popes crumbled.[3]

The first daughter of the Latin world (become again an united and independent nation) once more has Rome for her capital.

The martyrdom of a whole people — and what a people! —has yielded fruit.

The dream of so many thinkers and apostles — from Dante to Mazzini — is at last a reality, a living reality.

[1] Pius IX. [2] Napoleon III.

[3] Pipin the *Short*, King of the French in 752 and afterward also King of Italy, after he had aided Pope Stephen II in the war against Astolfo, King of the Longobardians, gave to the Church of Rome the *Italian pentapolis* comprising the cities of Rimini, Pesaro, Fano, Sinigaglia and Ancona. From this gift the temporal power of the Popes originates.

SECOND PART

I

How ancient Rome, during the Republic and also during the Empire, conquered and latinized Friuli, Istria, Trieste, Trentino, Trent and Dalmatia and how she made of the Adriatic Sea a great Roman Lake. "The Tavola Clesiana".

Friuli. About the year 185 B. C., when some trans-Alpine tribes "in crossing difficult passes and through dense forests" (Cadore, Carnia, Carinthia, Carso) made their way into Italy, the Roman Senate ordered them to "return immediately to the country from which they came and to remember that the Alps were the natural and insuperable boundary placed between Italy and foreign lands"; thus Livy narrates in his 29th book.

Friuli — the part which includes the Italian province of Udine and the part where Goritz, Aquileia (or rather the ruins of Aquileia), Grado, Gradisca, Monfalcone and Cervignano rise — at that time was a wild region inhabited by aggressive barbarians. It took on civilization only after it was conquered by the Romans. These, wise colonizers as they were invincible warriors, as soon as they had the new territory in their hands, began immediately to give an impulse to agriculture and commerce. They taught the people their language, spread abroad their laws, beautified many little towns, changing them into cities, founded Aquileia (182-181 B. C.) on the western shores of the Isonzo River in a low but fertile plain, and fortified it "to defend it against the barbarians who lived further up." (*Opus Romanorum est Aquileia munitum adversus supra illam habitantes barbaros*).

In the time of Augustus, Aquileia was surrounded by 22

kilometers of solid wall. It had a campidoglio (municipal building), a temple to Jupiter Optimus Maximus and temples to Juno, Apollo, the god Isonzo and the god Beleno; an aqueduct and forums, baths, circuses, and theatres, and had more than 200,000 inhabitants (some historians say 500,000). It was in direct communication with Rome by means of the Emilian Way (a continuation of the Flaminian way) and communicated with the Adriatic Sea by means of canals, and its port was at Grado. It was the military base of the Romans against the bellicose peoples of the north and east, so much so that this same Emperor Augustus established his general headquarters there in the wars against the Pannoni, Germans and the Illirici, while Julius Caesar drew soldiers from there in his wars against the Rhaetians and the Helvetians, as he himself has stated in his *Commentaries*. It was a commercial center of the highest rank where every day there flocked from all parts of the world sailors, merchants, slaves, with grain, oil, wine, pelts, metals and other important products. It was the seat of one of the three treasuries of Italy where the imperial gold money was stamped (*Aquileiae percussae et signatae.*) This was a privilege which Aquileia (rich in gold, amber, and precious stones) enjoyed second only to Rome. It was the emporium and the bulwark of the Latin race, curbing the grasping cupidity of the barbarians who were behind the Alps. It was also an attractive summer resort where people came from every country, including even Africa. Augustus and his wife Livia, and afterwards the Emperors Tiberius, Marcus Aurelius, and Diocletian did not scorn to pass their summers there. Augustus in 12 B. C. received Herod, king of Judea there; and in 307 A. D., Constantine the *Great* married Fausta, daughter of Maximian and sister of Maxentius.

Istria and Trieste. The Romans in Istria (the peninsula which pushes out into the Adriatic at the extreme north and which extends from the mouth of the Isonzo to the small bay of the gulf of Quarnero) were not less active and prodigal than those in Friuli. They conquered Istria, 177–178 B. C.[1]

[1] Of the first immigrants from Asia to Europe, generically known as the Pelasgi, great numbers went to the land which today is called Istria, and

There they established shipyards, piers and fortifications, made shores and mountain highways leading even to the heart of the Carnic Alps. They re-erected several cities whose buildings were of Roman architecture. At Pola they built a solid wall surrounding the city, a temple to Diana, a temple to Augustus with colonnades, an arch of the Sergii, many tombs, a superb granite amphitheatre, noted for its majestic beauty and judged inferior in size only to the Coliseum of Rome (the interior in its elliptical form measured 140 metres in length and 110 wide, and could accommodate 25,000 persons); they enlarged and fortified the port, making it a naval base of the first order.[1]

At Parenzo (*Parenthium*) the Romans erected a campidoglio, a forum, temples to Mars and Neptune and an enclosure for public meetings.

But at Trieste (*Tergeste*) they wished especially to spend lavishly the treasures and influence of which Rome was never sparing with the people who were faithful to her. They constructed an aqueduct, a surrounding wall, a campidoglio, public baths, an amphitheatre, a temple to Jove, and a magnificent military port, the most important on the Adriatic Sea, and a base for their commercial communication and for their wars with Central Europe;[2] finally they united

especially to that part which extends to the shores of Trieste. Later the Pelasgi were superseded by Etruscans. Finally toward the year 508 B. C. a great tribe came from Thrace, from the mouth of the Istro (as at that time the Danube was called), and drove off the first settlers, and called the place Istria from the name of the river from which they emigrated. This is the tradition. Later, Strabo and Pliny teach that the people who inhabited Istria before the Roman occupation were the Celts, Liburni, the Carnii and Siapidi, with a preponderance of the Celts, and therefore, it is certain that the first inhabitants of Istria were ethnographically formed as the other people of Italy, from various races united more or less by affinity, common interests, and by their common needs.

Trieste existed before the Roman conquest.

[1] In the rivalry between Caesar and Pompey the city of Pola sided with Pompey. Caesar, furious, wished to destroy it; but he was dissuaded by his gentle daughter Julia. In memory and recognition of this act, Pola was for a long time called *Pietas Juliae*.

[2] In the Trojan column in Rome among the many bas-reliefs there are two which represent Roman Trieste, surrounded by solid walls, with the shores guarded and with the port divided in two parts by a beautiful pier at the end of which rose a round tower surmounted by a lighthouse; in the part of the bas-relief which represents the port of Trieste, one sees also the Emperor Trajan embarking for home on his return from one of his victories against the Dacians (related to the German race).

the city to the tribes of Papinia, considering it a continuation of the province of Veneto; they invested it with the same rights as Rome, "thus permitting the Triestians to participate, as did the Romans, in the elections of magistrates of the Republic and afterward of the Empire, to be electors and to vote for laws." In other words the Romans made Trieste the culminating expression of their constructive energies in Istria, radiating its fecund life to vast zones.[1]

When emperor Augustus divided Italy into eleven regions, Trieste, Istria and Venice formed the tenth Italian region: *X Regio Italica* it was called. The Triestian militia were included in the tenth Apollinare region. Just then the city, thankful to have been raised by the victorious Roman eagles to the apogee of riches, culture and civilization, proud to have been and to be an integral part of the strongest and most enlightened race which has dominated the world, engraved on its coat of arms, on a purple field, the iron halbert which it received from Rome, the halbert symbolizing the *Alma Mater* in its Latin power and splendor.

Trentino. Trentino is the charming mountainous region lying between Veneto and Lombardy, dividing along its length the two Italian provinces for more than 100 kilometers.[2] Its boundaries extend for 452 kilometers, of which 136 divided it from the German Tyrol, 138 from Lombardy, 178 from Veneto. From Botzen to Riva (on Lake Garda) run the Adige, the rapid and impetuous river of which Dante and Virgil sang and from whose shores Trent (*Tridentum*) the most important city of the Trentino, rises.

The first inhabitants of this region were the Etruscans; then came the Gauls; then the Romans. From the fusion of the Quirites with the Gallic race was born the properly called Italian race. The Romans, after they had subjugated

[1] Julius Caesar, who many times conquered the Teutonic hordes who rushed down upon the Romans from the Alps and always forced them back to their sterile plains, extended the confines of Italy to Arsia on the gulf of Quarnero. This chain of mountains which enclosed Istria at the north, took his name and was called the "Julian Alps."

[2] In the treaty of 1815, Austria united the administration of Trentino to the German Tyrol and from that time Austria called it the Tyrol.

the Trentino in the times of Augustus, began to colonize it with great diligence until they brought it to an economic and civil condition worthy of their name. These facts have been proved historically, but notwithstanding this, the Roman origin of Trentino has always been placed in doubt by the enemies of the national rights of Italy in the Trentino.

But every doubt must disappear in the face of an unexpected discovery during the past century.

On April 29, 1869, two Italian peasants digging in a field near Cles in the Trentino found a bronze tablet in perfect condition upon which was inscribed a decree written in Latin by which the Roman Emperor Claudius in the year 49 A. D. settled the dispute that had lasted so long concerning the nationality of the inhabitants of the valley on the extreme north of the province of Trent.

The following is a translation of the Latin tablet discovered at Cles:

Marcus Junius Silanus and Quintus Sulpicius Camerinus, Consuls.

At Baia on the 15th of March, in an edict of Tiberius Claudius Caesar Augustus Germanicus, the following was proposed:

Tiberius Claudius Caesar Augustus, Pontifex Maximus, with power of Tribune for the sixth time, Emperor for the eleventh time, Consul appointed for the fourth time, father of the country, says:

Considering that, even under the rule of Tiberius Caesar, my uncle, Pinarius Apollinaris was sent to regulate the old controversies, of which my memory retains only that between the Commensi and the Bergalei; and that said Pinarius Apollinaris, on account of the absence of my uncle from Rome and also afterward under the rule of Caius (Caligula), neglected to report, as nobody asked him to do so; and having subsequently been told by Camurius Statutus that the greater part of the lands and forests are in my right, I sent my friend Julius Planta to settle this question, who, with the help of my procurators, the above mentioned peoples, and those of the neighboring territory, was to investigate all things and report carefully to me, as he has reported to me, in the memorial prepared by him; and I gave him authority to investigate and settle the remaining matters.

As to the legal condition of the Nauni, Tuliassi, and Sinduni, a part of them are united with the Tridentini, while another part is not united. Although the origin of these last is not clear enough to determine whether they have Roman citizenship, yet, in view of the fact that they are so mixed with the Tridentini and have enjoyed the right of citizenship for a long time, and that they could not be separated from that splendid municipality without great damage to it, I permit that they remain in possession of the right that they have for a long time believed themselves to possess. and this I do willingly, as I have heard that the majority of those people have been soldiers in my bodyguard, that others have been leaders of troops, or, as members of juries, have taken part in trials at Rome. These rights I give them so that all they have done as Roman citizens among themselves and with the Tridentini, or elsewhere, be considered legal, and that they may retain the names which they had previously adopted as Roman citizens.

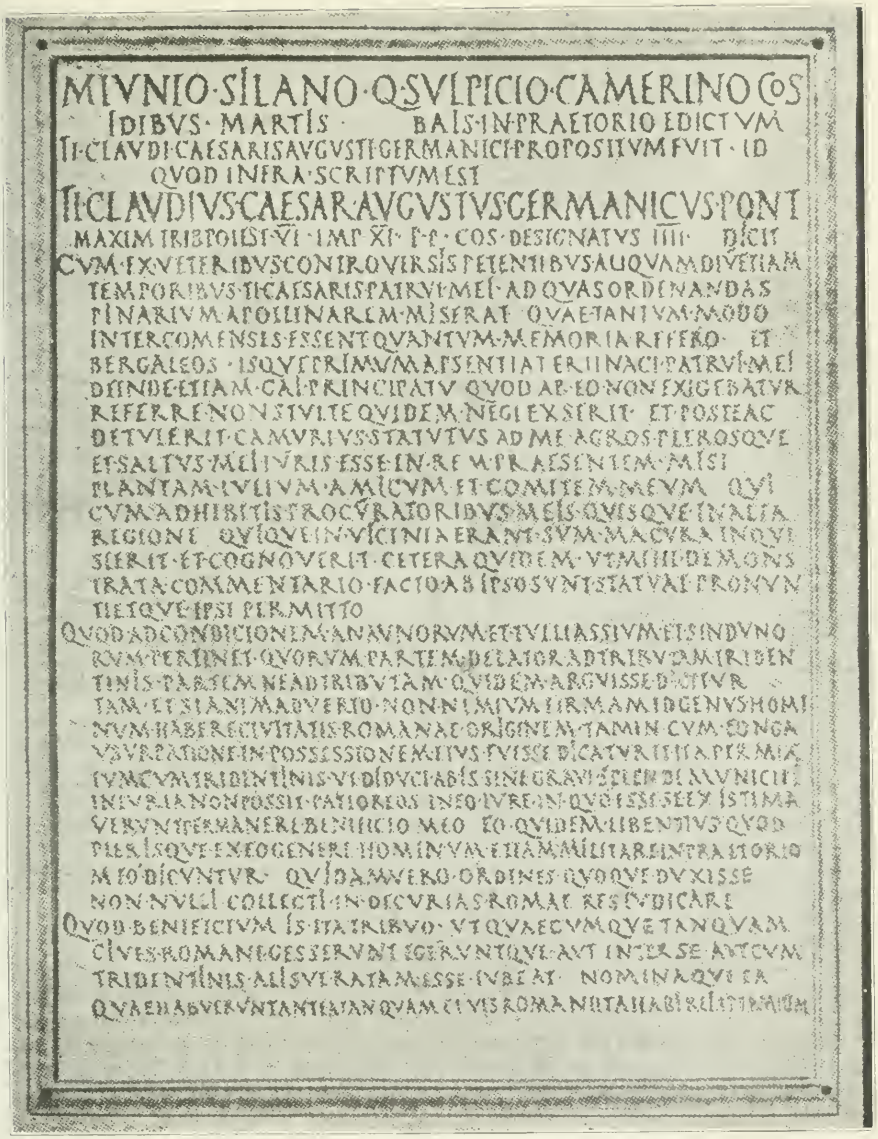
This precious document was soon baptized with the name of *Tavola Clesiana* and filled the hearts of Trentinians and Italians with joy. It interested scholars in every part of the world. Only from Germany and Austria came words of incredulity and scorn, but this did not move the bronze tablet containing the truth, and finally from the authors of these words of scorn themselves, came a recognition of the authenticity of the *Tavola Clesiana.* In the meantime, however, it was insinuated that the place where it was found had always been inhabited by people of the Teutonic race and never by the Romans.

The Trentini continued their excavations and came upon large quantities of human bones and skulls, together with lances, swords, javelins, coins, etc.

Theodore Mommsen, the famous German historian and archaeologist, hastened to Cles to investigate. He was followed by other German professors to see if by means of later objects they could destroy the proof brought to light by the *Tavola Clesiana.*

After a minute examination it was clearly shown that the bones and skulls, lances, swords, javelins, and coins belonged without a doubt to people of pure Latin and not of Teutonic race.

Theodore Mommsen, who probably knew more about



MIVNIO·SILANO·Q·SVLPICIO·CAMERINO COS
IDIBVS·MARTIS BAIS·IN·PRAETORIO EDICTVM
TI·CLAVDI·CAESARIS AVGVSTI·GERMANICI·PROPOSITVM FVIT·ID
QVOD INFRA·SCRIPTVM EST
TI·CLAVDIVS·CAESAR·AVGVSTVS·GERMANICVS·PONT
MAXIM TRIB POI EST·VI·IMP·XI·P·P·COS·DESIGNATVS IIII· DICIT
CVM·EX·VETERIBVS·CONTROVERSIS·PETENTIBVS·ALIQVAM·DIVE·ETIAM
TEMPORIBVS·TI·CAESARIS·PATRVI·MEI·AD QVAS ORDENANDAS
PINARIVM·APOLLINAREM·MISERAT QVAE·TANTVM·MODO
INTERCOMENSES·ESSENT·QVANTVM·MEMORIA·REFERO· ET
BERGALEOS·ISQVE·PRIMVM·APSENTIAT·ERI·INACI·PATRVI·MEI
DEINDE·ETIAM·GAI·PRINCIPATV QVOD AB·EO·NON EXIGEBATVR
REFERRE·NON STVLTE QVIDEM·NEGI EX SERIT· ET·POSTEAC
DETVLERIT·CAMVRIVS·STATVTVS AD ME·AGROS·PLEROSQVE
ET·SALTVS·MEI·IVRIS·ESSE·IN·REM·PRAESENTEM·MISI
PLANTAM·IVLIVM·AMICVM·ET·COMITEM·MEVM QVI
CVM·ADHIBITIS·PROCVRATORIBVS·MEIS·QVISQVE·IN·ALTA
REGIONE QVIQVE·IN·VICINIA·ERANT·SVM·MACVRA·INQVI
SIERIT·ET·COGNOVERIT·CETERA QVIDEM·VT·MIHI·DEMONS
TRATA·COMMENTARIO·FACTO·AB IPSO·SVNT·STATVAE·PRONVN
TIETQVE·IPSI PERMITTO
QVOD·AD·CONDICIONEM·ANAVNORVM·ET·TVLLIASSIVM·ET·SINDVNO
RVM·PERTINET·QVORVM·PARTEM·DELATOR·AD·TRIBVTAM·TRIDEN
TINIS·PARTEM·NEAD·TRIBVTAM·QVIDEM·ARGVISSE·DICITVR
TAM·ET·SI·ANIMADVERTO·NON·NIMIVM·FIRMAM·IDGENVS·HOMI
NVM·HABERE·CIVITATIS·ROMANAE·ORIGINEM·TAMIN·CVM·EO·NGA
VBVR·PATIONE·IN·POSSESSIONEM·EIVS·FVISSE·DICATVR·ET·ITA·PERMIA
IVM·CVM·TRIDENTINIS·VT·DIDVCI·ABIS·SINE·GRAVI·SPLENDI·MVNICIPI
INIVRIA·NON·POSSIT·PATIOREOS·IN·EO·IVRE·IN·QVO·ESSE·SE·EX·ISTIMA
VERVNT·PERMANERE·BENIFICIO·MEO EO·QVIDEM·LIBENTIVS·QVOD
PLERISQVE·EX·EO·GENERE·HOMINVM·ETIAM·MILITARE·IN·PRAETORIO
MEO·DICVNTVR· QVIDAM·VERO·ORDINES·QVOQVE·DVXISSE
NON·NVLLI·COLLECTI·IN·DECVRIAS·ROMAE·RESIVDICARE
QVOD·BENIFICIVM·IS·ITA·TRIBVO· VT·QVAECVMQVE·TANQVAM
CIVES·ROMANE·GESSERVNT·EGERVNTQVE·AVT·INTER·SE·AVT·CVM
TRIDENTINIS·ALISVE·RATAM·ESSE·IVBEAT· NOMINAQVE·EA
QVAE·HABVERVNT·ANTE·ATANQVAM·CIVES·ROMANI·ITA·HABERE·ET·PERMIVM

THE "TAVOLA CLESIANA"

Roman history than any man of his generation, in a pamphlet which he published on the result of his investigation, declared that all the facts proved that the region of "Trent is Italian and belongs to Roman Italy."

Thus the insinuators were obliged to swallow the pill and close their mouths.

DALMATIA.[1] A controversy between the Dalmatians and some other people (Lissani and Daorsi), allies of Rome, provoked for the first time the intervention of Rome in the affairs of Dalmatia. A strong army commanded by the Roman consul Marcio Figulo arrived in that region in 156 B. C., besieged the capital, then Dalminio, which they wiped out, and forced the Dalmatians to an onerous peace.

Much later Rome was able definitely to subjugate Dalmatia, however proud she had been of her own freedom, and induced her to change from a barbaric to a civilized country.

On her coast, ports like that of Zara, Salona near Spálato, Ragusa, Antivari, received a wonderful impulse, and together with the ports of Fiume, Trieste, Pola, Aquileia, Ravenna, Rimini, Ancona, Bari, Brindisi and Durazzo, all being very important cities, made of the Adriatic Sea a great Roman lake flourishing with life and with commerce.

In short, the Romanization of Dalmatia was so deeply rooted that the Emperor Diocletian, when he abdicated the Empire (305 A. D.), tired in both mind and body because of the great cares of state and also because of physical indisposition, preferred to return to Salona in Dalmatia where he engaged in nothing more serious than the artistic cultivation of his garden until he died (313 A.D.).

And the Emperor Julius Nepos (the father of Romulus Augustulus), who was removed by Orestes in 476, could not do better than to take refuge in Dalmatia, the last outpost of Roman influence.

Thus the dominion of Rome, at first feared and treated with hostility, finished by becoming (thanks to the wisdom which it exercised) the golden age for the populations of

[1] The region on the east shore of the Adriatic Sea.

Istria, Trent, Trieste and Dalmatia, and for all of the people who today dwell on the north-eastern boundaries of Italy.

And the sacred name of Urbs (Rome), generator of light and heat like the sun, however stained by the evils of tyrants, was by them blessed, loved, defended, and gloriously engraved on the pages of their history.

II

The barbarian invasion into Italy. Attila, *flagellum Dei,* destroys (452 A. D.) the beautiful city of Aquileia, founded by the Romans in 181–182 B. C. In a mass meeting, presided over by the Emperor Charlemagne, the Italians of Istria protest against the Slavic immigration (804 A. D.). The Republic of the Doges liberates the Adriatic sea from foreign pirates. The marriage of Venice with the sea. The spontaneous submission of Dalmatia (999 A. D.) after eight centuries of fidelity. The " honorable burial " of the standard of St. Mark.

After the death of the Roman Emperor Marcus Aurelius at Vindobona (Vienna) in the year 180, the golden era passed forever from these north eastern boundaries of Italy. The Roman Empire fell into the hands of soldiers blinded by the lowest and most unbridled and degenerate passions; it lost its ancient vigor, its ancient prestige and its ancient splendor. It fell. And then the barbarians (Goths, Vandals, Suevi, Burgundians, Huns), with their heads adorned with bulls' horns, their shoulders and chests covered with skins of wild animals — tribes the powerful Roman *gladius* had kept in subjection for centuries — descended upon Italy like an avalanche from the Alps, thirsting for revenge, avid for spoils and dominion; destroying fields, cities and people, taking away the strength of the country; degrading it; subjecting it to most humiliating servitude. And Italy sank to that deepest abyss of darkness which was called the *medieval age.*

The first fury of the barbarians naturally struck the eastern regions of Italy, viz.: Trentino, Friuli, Istria, Dalmatia. But these were not easily swallowed up. They opposed the ferocious invaders; they defended their Italianity with the daring and heroism which was the first germ of the present Irredentist movement and which, with other causes, determined the intervention of Italy (May, 1915) in the great conflict of the nations, thus repeating with the everlasting fatal and alternating recurrence of human events, the tragedies which took place in the past, among the same people and in the same Alps.

It is enough to recall to mind Aquileia besieged by the Huns. Aquileia fought strenuously against her enemies, repulsing them many times. To punish her for her extraordinary defense Attila, *flagellum Dei*, after he had taken the city by a furious assault, massacred the citizens, the aged, the women, and children; sacked; burned; wiped the metropolis from the face of the earth (452 A. D.) as if a torrent of lava had covered it—the metropolis, full of strength and beauty which the Romans had erected with such wisdom and such love.[1]

The survivors of Aquileia and those of the other cities in the confines destroyed by Attila, took refuge in the small islands in the neighborhood of the Po estuary, and there developed by degrees, the city which afterwards, because of its superior government, became the Queen of the Adriatic: Venice.

When the Italians of the northeastern boundaries could not maintain their nationality by military means, they used other methods. It will suffice to remember that in the year

[1] Later Aquileia revived and again became powerful, thanks to her patriarchate, which was one of the greatest theocratic and military principalities of medieval times. Her church, established by the council as early as 38, was, after that of Rome, the most famous of the Christian religion; her court was the most splendid and most celebrated of that age. The patriarchs were independent. They paid only a simple feudal homage to the emperor. The thirteenth century touched the acme of patriarchal power.

In 1420 Venice became absolute mistress of Friuli and suppressed that theocratic and military power. The Bishop of Venice obtained from Rome the title of Patriarch of Aquileia, with jurisdiction over that diocese.

568 the Longobardians (Germans of the north) began to descend upon Italy, commanded by their King Alboin. These new barbarians, like the former, did little but destroy and kill.

The Italians on the eastern boundaries were compelled to abandon the interior of their own country because they were continually subjected to onslaughts by savage invaders, and were obliged to take refuge on the sea coast, which opened to them their only way of escape, where they devoted themselves to navigation and fishing.

But the Emperor Charlemagne drove the Longobardians from Italy, and with the intention, perhaps praiseworthy, of repopulating the interior of Istria which the Italians had deserted, he committed the error of calling some tribes of Slavs, who for long years had coveted it.

The Istrians did not take kindly to such action. They believed it to be dangerous to their ethnical compages, and to the reconstitution of their future political unification. Therefore, they were greatly agitated and protested in a solemn mass meeting held on the banks of the river Risano, and presided over by Charlemagne (804 A. D.); they succeeded in convincing the powerful Emperor of the Franks of the error which he had committed. He immediately suspended the Slavic immigration into Istria and instead revived the most useful Roman institutions, adapting them to the changed condition of the times.

When the Italians of the northeastern boundaries—who had never willingly tolerated the domination of the barbarians — saw that Venice followed the traditions of Rome better than the other contemporaneous Italian republics, it did not hesitate to pass under the protection of the winged lion of St. Mark.

It will suffice to recall Dalmatia. The Narentine, Slavic, and Croatian pirates infested the Adriatic for a long time, assaulting, killing and plundering. And not content with this, they demanded great tributes from the terror-stricken inhabitants of the Dalmatian coasts, and even from the Venetians.

The Dalmatians implored the aid of the Republic, which at other times had defended them against the tyranny of strangers. Fortunately there was a doge in power at that time who was extraordinarily strong, resolute and courageous and who was the dynamic and vibrating amalgamation of all the Venetian energies: Peter Orseolo II, son of that famous Peter Orseolo who was canonized by the Church, who began at his own expense and brought to a high point the construction of the magnificent cathedral of St. Mark.

Orseolo listened to and comforted the Dalmatian ambassador and declared to the Venetians in firm accents that, in order to wipe out the ignominy to which the Republic had been subjected for so long, and again to give security to their brothers, who were continually tyrannized over by the corsairs, they must have war!

The Venetians were so moved that they consented and gave full liberty of action to their doge.

On Ascension Day of the year 999 A. D., a fleet, formidably armed, weighed anchor from Venice under command of Peter Orseolo II.

The pirates, however, insisted more than ever on the collection of the usual tribute.

The doge responded that he himself would take it to them.

In fact, he went immediately. But instead of a pecuniary tribute, he took the brute force of the winged lion of St. Mark.

Great naval battles were fought, especially at Curzola and Lagosta. The Slavic pirates from the Gulf of Narente made a furious resistance. But this availed them nothing. Their fleet was burned by the Venetians. And those not killed were pursued to the continent and a · ain repulsed and dispersed outside of its confines.

The Adriatic was thus finally freed fro piracy and from the terrors of barbarians.

The Venetians received the conquerin doge in triumph; they conferred upon him the title of D ke of Dalmatia; they further ordered that at the annua feast of the Ascension the great achievement should also e commemorated,

celebrating the symbolic marriage of Venice with the sea (the doge embarked with other magistrates of the Republic on the golden *Bucintoro,* magnificently ornamented, where he threw a ring into the sea pronouncing these significant words: *Desponsamus te, mare nostro, in signum veri perpetuique dominii;* in memory of the true and perpetual dominion that the Republic had acquired over the Adriatic sea which was thenceforth called the *Gulf of Venice.*)[1]

Dalmatia — exulting and grateful — rewarded the sister liberator, by offering spontaneous homage of subjection to her, swearing "eternal" obedience and fidelity to her. Dalmatia, in fact, remained under the merciful government of Venice, first for four entire centuries; then, after a brief and involuntary interruption, for another 377 years (altogether about eight centuries!). She would have remained "eternally" in reality if the treaty of Campoformio, drawn on October 16, 1795, between Napoleon I and Francis II, Emperor of Austria, had not treacherously struck a death blow to the Republic of the Doges, sacrificing it to the insatiable cupidity of the Hapsburgs.

One can well imagine the sorrow of the Dalmatians in consequence of this.

At Zara, the capital of Dalmatia, the Venetian flag was placed on the great altar of the church and there, first the officers, then the soldiers, then the people, kissed it "and so covered it with their tears that it was entirely wet."

At Perasto, the standard of St. Mark, like a sacred relic, was placed under the great altar of the church, while the commander, in the presence of the people, spoke these touching words in the soft Venetian dialect: "For 377 years we have defended thee with our faith and our valor on the sea when thy enemies have called us. For 377 years our substance, our blood and our lives have at all times been dedicated to thee, and in this until now we have found our greatest happiness. Thou with us, we with thee, have always been victorous, always illustrious. Since there is nothing more we can do for thee, let our hearts be thy

[1]The celebration of the marriage of Venice with the sea for centuries was observed on Ascension Day.

honored tomb; let our tears be thy greatest and truest eulogy!"

Also the islands of Quarnero,[1] conquered by the Doge Peter Orseolo II, always remained under the dominion of Venice, except in the period between 1378 to 1409 in which they, with Dalmatia, were temporarily ceded to Hungary. They remained under Venice until the end of the Republic, when as a result of the treaty of Campoformio, which was confirmed, as we have seen, by the the congress of Vienna of 1815, they were consigned with Venice itself to Austria.

[1] The Gulf of Quarnero is that wide arm of the Adriatic Sea which insinuates itself between the eastern coast of the Istrian peninsula and the Croatian shore. From the curve of Porto Re to the heights of Meia and Tersato, finishing at Fiume, *is* Italy, and marks the geographic confines of Italy. Its islands were also in the power of the Romans, and in the time of Julius Caesar were added to Liburnia, this latter being a part of Illyria.

III

The Communes. Frederick Barbarossa, Emperor of Germany, descends upon Italy (1154) massacres, sacks and burns; captures the celebrated reformer, Arnold of Brescia, and delivers him into the hands of Adrian IV, who burns him alive. The subservient Diet of Roncaglia, Milan, Crema and Piacenza rebels. Barbarossa takes a frightful revenge, besieges the smallest town, Crema. But not being able to conquer by force of arms, he takes children of Crema and Milan whom he holds in hostage, ties them to movable wooden towers and exposes them to the shots of the besieged citizens. Love of Country overcomes paternal love in the Italians. The destruction of Crema and Milan. The *Veronese League*. An energetic Pope. The *Lombardian League*. The Archbishop Cristiano of Magonza, plenipotentiary of Barbarossa in Italy, besieges Ancona and forces the citizens to eat nettles and leather. The heroism of the women. The union of the communes produces the epopee. The *Carroccio*. The *Company of Death*. Barbarossa is defeated by the Italians at Legnano (1176). He is defeated also on the sea by the combined fleets of Venice and Trieste. He suffers the humiliation of kissing the foot of his enemy (Pope Alexander III). He sues for peace and leaves Italy forever without having put it under the yoke.

When the Communes of Italy attempted to re-establish the unity and independence of the Patria, which again had been invaded and devastated by the Teutons, the regions of the eastern confines did not limit themselves simply to an exhibition of a purely spiritual solidarity, but they threw themselves with faith and zeal into the field of action, where danger was the greatest, giving their contribution of thought and of blood to the national cause. In this connection one has only to recall Trieste.

It is well known that on the ruins of the old feudal edifice in Italy arose the communal autonomy, or free gov-

ernment of cities, with a supreme magistracy of three, six, or twelve consuls; with a minor magistracy of notables called *Credenza*, who deliberated upon ordinary affairs; with a general assembly of all of the citizens who also deliberated upon the more important things (made laws, stipulated treaties of alliance, declared wars and concluded peace, coined money, etc.).

Frederick Barbarossa, Emperor of Germany, decided to reduce Italy to its ancient Teutonic servitude, and invaded it (1154) with a great army; devastated fields; fired villages and cities, among them Chieri and Asti; he then besieged Tortona, and ordered that it should immediately break its alliance with Milan. The noble little city refused to obey the dishonoring command. Barbarossa, however, assaulted it, and after two months of bitter fighting took the city, sacked and destroyed it. After he had achieved such brave ends, he went to Pavia, where he crowned himself King of Italy. Afterward, invited expressly by Pope Adrian IV, he betook himself to southern Italy with the intention of extending his dominion and, at the same time, capturing and delivering to the aforesaid pontificate the bitterest enemy, which at that time the Church had: Arnold of Brescia.

He was a monk with an inspired and serious mind, who dreamed of and desired above all things the religious and political elevation of mankind, having for its basis truth and morality in a positive and sane sense. He would not recognize the doctrine of infant baptism, prayers for the dead, or the sacrament of the host. Preaching thus with ardent and unbridled impetuosity against the temporal power of the popes and against the corrupt customs of the ecclesiastics, he was able to gain the confidence and love of the people, and to drive out successively the Popes Lucius II and Eugenius III, and to found in Rome a democratic republic with a senate. But after ten years of power, Adrian IV — an astute Pope, audacious and unscrupulous — attacked Arnold of Brescia; defamed him; excommunicated him, together with those who supported him; filled the city of Rome with such terror that the brave reformer was repudiated, expelled and persecuted.

Barbarossa found him a refugee in a castle of Campania. He dragged him from the hands of those who had given him hospitality; he dragged him in chains to the feet of Adrian IV in Rome and this good vicar of Christ—in the height of his joy — condemned him to the stake; he had his ashes thrown into the river Tiber; he rewarded Barbarossa for his service to the Church by placing on his head the imperial crown with great pomp in the Vatican.

The Roman people, roused by such infamous treatment, forced Barbarossa to leave suddenly for Germany.

The tyrant revenged himself for such humiliation by firing and destroying the innocent city of Spoleto.

Barbarossa, always thirsting for blood and power, again hurled himself on Italy three years later, and took the city of Brescia; then with an army of 100,000 infantry and 15,000 cavalry marched on Milan, to punish it for having rebuilt Tortona, and to punish it above all for the spirit of rebellion which it too stubbornly showed against the Teutonic suzerainty.

The metropolis of Lombardy defended itself like a lioness so long as it had provisions, and when these failed it surrendered; but it was not an unconditional surrender, it was an honorable pact (1158).

Barbarossa, however, called a subservient Diet at Roncaglia in the Piacentino and determined that the free communes must depend administratively and judicially on an imperial representative called the *Podestà*.

Milan, Crema, and Piacenza chafed, protested, and said clearly that they would never submit to such humiliation.

Barbarossa arose in fury. The most cruel spirit of revenge raged in his proud soul; he hurled himself with a powerful army against Crema, which was the weakest of the communes. But he was repulsed. Then he had recourse to a stratagem. He caused several movable wooden towers to be erected; in the inside of these he posted his most ferocious soldiers armed to the teeth; on the outside were bound the little children of Crema and of Milan, whom he held as hostages. Thus loaded, he ordered the towers taken to the walls of the city, hoping that the besieged citizens, in order

to save their own children, would no longer hold off. Instead the opposite occurred. The citizens, especially the fathers, continued their defense and stormed at the same time the hated enemy and their own little ones, crying with the faith of neophytes, "Happy are those who die for their country!"

For six months — from July 1159, to January 1160 — the tragic battle lasted. Finally, because of the cutting of the aqueducts, the lack of food, and the flower of her citizens being wasted, Crema was constrained to yield The Teuton, thus prizing it for the heroism which it exhibited, sacked and burned it!

Nothwithstanding the slaughter of Crema, Milan persisted in her rebellious attitude. Barbarossa, who had already received reinforcements from Germany, assaulted it with savage force. But without avail. He attacked it more than once, but his attempts were always broken like the waves of the sea against the rocks. Then he understood that only through starvation could he conquer the Milanese. He called for other reinforcements. They came. He besieged the city. It resisted for two long years. Then pressed by increasing numbers of their enemies, and exhausted by the absolute lack of food, it surrendered (March, 1162). The Teuton treated them savagely; he destroyed the entire city and covered it with salt, a sign that it should never rise again!

He then returned to Germany to receive and enjoy the honors of his triumph.

But the destruction of Milan greatly impressed the other cities of Italy; they became thoughtful and were convinced that for their common safety they must immediately and solidly combine.

The first who united — after they had driven out from their respective places the garrisons and imperial ministers —were Verona, Vicenza, Padua and Treviso: *The Veronese League.*

Barbarossa fell upon Verona like a falcon, but he found it no easy task; indeed it proved to be so difficult that he deemed it prudent to return to Germany for reinforcements (1164).

Meanwhile in 1159 Pope Adrian IV died. Barbarossa, by corrupting, threatening and intimidating, forced his cardinals to elect an anti-Pope, who would serve him (Vittore IV), and after the death of the latter he caused Pasquale III to be elected,— as vile and servile a soul as his predecessor.

The independent cardinals, however, voted for Bandinelli of Siena (Alexander III), a sagacious and energetic man who sympathized with the cause of the Communes. This Pope from Anagni excommunicated Barbarossa and afterward prepared to combat him to the last drop of blood, joining with Venice, Bergamo, Brescia, Mantua and Ferrara, the *Veronese League*, which after that time was called the *Lombard League*.

The representatives of the allied cities — uniting with the fugitive Milanese — met with them on April 7, 1176, in the convent of Pontída, situated between Bergamo and Lecco. There they clasped hands; looked into each others eyes, read one another's hearts, fused their wills into a single will, swearing by fraternal pacts to defend the liberty of the Patria which had been trampled upon and villified by outside barbaric tyranny.

At this memorable assembly the representatives of Trieste participated in the proceedings with the same faith and zeal as the others. In the progress of time Piacenza, Parma, Modena, Bologna, Reggio, Novara, Vercelli, Como, Asti, Tortona, Ravenna, Rimini, Imola and Forlì joined the *Lombard League*.

The *League* immediately began to rebuild Milan in spite of the prohibition of Barbarossa; then — in contraposition to Pavia and the Marquis of Monferrato who remained partisans of the tyrant — they founded a city between the rivers Tenaro and Bormide, which they named Alessandria in honor of Alexander III, the Pope who gave them sustained help and directed the *League*.

Meanwhile the Archbishop Cristiano of Magonza, Envoy Plenipotentiary of Barbarossa in Italy, attempted to subjugate Ancona, which had rebelled against the Teuton yoke. The noble city of the Adriatic was besieged by land and sea; was attacked from every side by night and day;

but it defended itself with sublime heroism even when its sons were so reduced by the cruelty of the enemy that they were obliged to feed themselves on boiled nettles and shoe-leather cooked in vinegar.

Some episodes may be given.

A young mother, with a child at her breast, saw a warrior near the wall on the ground gasping from starvation; she approached him and said: "I have not eaten for several days; I have no more milk, not even for my little one; but if a drop yet remains, take it, it is yours!" These words had a marvelous effect. The warrior revived; arose; smiled at the generous creature; ran where the fighting was thickest, and courageously faced death.

A most violent attack threatened to overthrow the city. The defenders fought with their usual valor, but they recognized the extreme peril which faced them. Then an aged woman by the name of Stamura grasped a burning brand, and flung it into a pile of projectiles, firing and destroying the machines of the enemy.

The Lombardians and Romagnese came to the aid of the city. The Teutons were obliged to fly, and Ancona saved her freedom (1174).

Barbarossa, disgusted at the turn things in Italy had taken against him, put himself at the head of another colossal army and marched toward Mont Cenis, determined to finish for all time the hope of the Italians for unity and liberty.

He first burned Susa; then he subjugated Turin and Asti; then marched against Alessandria. This latter city, although having nothing but primitive fortifications of earth and straw, resisted the assaults of the enemy for four months. Finally the besieged citizens learned that help from the allies was near. Full of exultation they made a sortie in the night; they attacked the enemy, killed them in great numbers and forced the others to retreat in disorder (1175).

Barbarossa became worried. He understood that the enterprise which he was undertaking presented grave difficulties; he attempted to make pacts with *The League*, but the

negotiations failed entirely. Then he waited for reinforcements from Germany, and as soon as they came, he moved resolutely on Milan.

The Italians of *The League* did not permit him to finish his journey; they went to meet him on the way followed by the *Carroccio*.[1]

This was a chariot which, according to the description given by Lodovico Antonio Muratori, in his *Annals of Italy*, had four wheels built higher than usual with a much broader platform than that of a common car and was painted a flaming red. In the middle arose an altar covered by a rich red rug of such dimensions that it fell from the sides and touched the wheels. In the center of the altar rose a flagstaff, to which was attached a huge crucifix and a bell which rang in warning.

The car was drawn by four pairs of great oxen, all of the same size and color, caparisoned with rich drapery, red for those on the right and white for those on the left. From this center the orders were given. Around the car the infantry formed a compact guard against the enemy's cavalry. It was believed if the *Carroccio* fell that war and honor would be lost.

The Milanese formed, for the extra protection of this their sacred shield, two companies of chosen young men (one of 300 and the other of 900) armed with neck guards, battle axes and daggers. The one of 900, commanded by Alberto da Giussano—who wore the breastplate and carried the sword with the gilded leather presented to him by the people, so says tradition—was called the *Company of Death*, for these young warriors had sworn to conquer or die. The 300 also had sworn to protect the *Carroccio* with their lives.

On May 29, 1176, the army of Barbarossa and that of the *Lombard League* found themselves face to face near the castle of Legnano between the two rivers Olona and Ticino, about twenty miles from Milan.

In the first encounter the Milanese cavalry was repulsed. The Teuton cavalry galloped toward the chariot.

[1]This car was designed and put into use by Ariberto da Intimiano, bishop of Milan and supreme magistrate of the Commune, in 1039.

The defenders threw themselves on their knees; they invoked God and St. Ambrose.[1] In a flash they were on their feet. They planted themselves like giants. They stolidly received the blows of the enemy. They fought as one man. They split open the heads of horses and horsemen. They were on the point of defeat because of the superior number of the enemy. The *Carroccio*—symbol of Patria, of Liberty, of Glory — was in danger.

Then the *Company of Death* cried again, "We conquer or die!" and hurled themselves into the thickest of the fight. They butchered every Teuton whom they encountered. They threw the imperial standard to the ground. They terrified and put to flight the entire army of the enemy. While they were fighting, they were reinforced by the cavalry of *The League* which gave the final blow, pursuing the enemy with swords at their backs for a good eight miles.

Barbarossa, who had personally fought in the first line of battle, remained buried with his horse under a mountain of corpses.[2] He was believed to be dead. But two days later he appeared at Pavia, alone, without his helmet, without his sword, covered with dust and blood, pale, silent and sullen.

The battle of Legnano was the strongest affirmation of Italianity which the Italians made in the medieval era.

The city of Trieste — faithful to the oath proffered by its representatives at Pontída — not only contributed the blood of its own sons, but it did more: it united with Venice to combat the enemy on the sea. In fact, on Ascension Day the combined fleets of the Venetians and Triestians, composed of fifty vessels commanded by the Doge Sebastiano Ziani, encountered near Salvore (a promontory a short distance from Trieste) the imperial fleet composed of 75 vessels, and they defeated it and even captured the flagship to which Otto, son of Barbarossa, was assigned

The Teuton tyrant hastened to kiss the feet of Pope Alexander III. Only thus could he obtain from *The League* an armistice of six years, signed at Venice during the year 1177.

[1] Protector of Milan.

[2] Some historians say that he fled in a cowardly manner.

He attempted too late (the wolf may lose his hair, but never his vices) with every art, with every effort, to revenge the humiliation which he had suffered. But his efforts were in vain. For example: by an edict in 1182 he commanded the city of Trent, which was governed as a Commune, never again to elect her magistrate council; to put a stop to any act of sovereignty; to submit itself to an imperial vicar. But Trent refused to obey. It continued with its independent government.

Losing thus every hope of subjugating Italy, Barbarossa, as soon as the accorded armistice expired, was forced to conclude a definite peace with the Italians, signed at Constance (a city of Germany) in the year 1183.

IV

The struggle of the Triestians for their municipal independence and for the maintenance of their Italianity from the Peace of Constance (1183). Against the Bishop-barons (1295 to 1349). Against Venice (1368 to 1381). The "dedition" to Austria (1382). The Anti-Austrian party, its rebellions and martyrology. The pride of their Roman heritage. Triestine history from Fifteenth to Eighteenth Century.

In the vicissitudes which followed the war against Barbarossa the regions of the eastern boundaries continued to fight for their Italian liberty. It is sufficient to remember Trieste, in which, more than in any other Irredentist city, centers most of the historical, traditional, and political ideals of this region.

When Trieste entered into the *Lombard League*, it was governed by a Bishop-baron dependent on the Patriarchate of Aquileia. But with the treaty of Constance in 1183, it obtained (as did the other cities of the *Lombard League*) the autonomy of its own administration, the right to elect its own magistrates and the right to make alliances, to declare war and to treat for peace.

Notwithstanding this, only in 1295 was Trieste emancipated. And this is how it came about. The Bishop-Baron Brisa was in great need of money to pay his debts. The Triestians who were rich, profited by this. They offered the Bishop-Baron the means of his release from his debts.

The offer was accepted. The notaries were called in. They drew up a deed by which the Bishop-Baron Brisa ceded "for himself and all of his ancestors" all rights of sovereignty over Trieste. From that moment the sovereign power of the city passed into the hands of the citizens. The first *Podestà* elected as the head of the "free state of Trieste" was Enrico della Torre, belonging to the Torriani family of Milan who long before had settled in Istria.

Della Torre immediately promulgated statutes similar to those of the communes of Italy; built solid walls around the city to prevent outside attacks; systematized internal affairs; encouraged every good enterprise; constructed many buildings; organized literary circles and colleges for fine arts and trade. Civic virtue increased.

Such rapid moral and material development naturally gave rise to envy and cupidity among the city's enemies.

In 1313, the former majordomo of the Bishop Marco Ranfo conspired to overthrow the municipal government of Trieste and to re-establish the baronial government of the Bishops. But the plot was discovered in time. The Triestians armed themselves at the sound of the tocsin, assaulted the house of Ranfo, razed it to the ground and executed the traitor and his accomplices.

In 1349 Bishop Antonio Negri, a creature of Charles IV, a quarrelsome and violent man, reopened the question and claimed the baronial domination of the city. The Triestians responded to this by arming themselves. The Bishop excommunicated them. The Triestians replied by declaring a sort of boycott against him and against the whole body of the clergy of the cathedral; they then had recourse to arbitration. This gave a decision in favor of the Commune.

In the summer of 1368 a Venetian galley, anchored in the port of Trieste, captured a Triestian merchant ship, which had refused to pay the tax of free passage into the Adriatic

"which was the property of the Republic of St. Mark." The Triestians assaulted the galley and massacred the captain and crew.

Venice immediately sent a fleet and an army to avenge the offense. "After a long drawn out siege," Trieste was obliged to surrender. But a year later she again revolted.

The Venetians renewed the siege.

The Triestians, not knowing to what saint to apply to save their freedom, invoked the assistance of Leopold III, duke of Austria. He rushed to their aid with an army of 12,000 men, but was overwhelmingly defeated. As with superior force he prepared to revenge himself, the Venetians calmed him by giving him 75,000 sequins of gold (about 1,000,000 lire) "for the inconvenience of the voyage and for the ships seized."

Trieste was thus left to her fate.

She attempted five years later with the help of the Genoese, and in 1379 with the help of the Commune of Udine, and again in 1380 with the help of the Genoese, to liberate herself from the domination of the "Serenissima" (the Republic of Venice). But in this she did not succeed.

Finally the Duke of Savoy, Amedeo VI, called *Conte Verde*, mediated between the two belligerent cities. And from this a decision resulted August 24, 1381, which affirmed among other things, in order to avoid further controversies, that Venice must renounce every pretension to the City of Trieste "and her dependencies." Venice renounced it.

But such a solution, however favorable, did not calm the Triestians.

They thought to forestall any future danger by assuring themselves of the protection of a potentate who would be able to defend them effectively against any who might again attempt to interfere with their municipal independence. And they were not wrong, considering that Trieste had never had peace during that entire century. They turned first to the Italian republics, to meet only refusal. Then they were constrained to look to foreigners. Had not other Italian Communes done likewise? They looked about and deemed it wise to select one who was near at hand. At the

north of the territory of Trieste were the boundary lines of the Dukes of Austria. These more than others would be interested in Trieste, because they could easily direct the current of commerce to the interior of their country. This consideration especially induced the Triestians to take the memorable step which afterward was called by the enemies of Italian national unity "the spontaneous dedition to Austria."

In 1382 the Triestians sent ambassadors to Gratz to offer the Commune to Duke Leopold in exchange for his "protection and tutelage." The Duke did not require much urging and accepted it. But he was obliged to swear "for himself and for his successors" to respect the municipal government of Trieste and all their rights of sovereignty acquired by the people (especially those which declared war and concluded peace) and not to surrender the city to feudal tenure or sell it to any one.

The "spontaneous dedition" was limited, as one can see. The city proved this later by the sentences which the magistrates of the Commune inflicted on the citizens who went into the military service of Austria, and on those who had recourse to imperial authority against the municipal judges, and on those who conspired in favor of the Emperor. This was proved above all by the anti-Austrian party which rose up in Trieste after the "spontaneous dedition," notwithstanding the rights which the city had reserved; a party which also had its martyrs. In fact in 1424 Donato Scorpion and Nicolò Urigio were hanged (other Triestians, among whom was Giulio Orefice, were condemned to prison) because they were found guilty of having stirred up the people against the sovereignty of Austria. In 1443 the Triestian, Giulio Cancellieri, leader of another revolt against Austria, was first tied to the tail of a horse and dragged through the streets of the city, then hanged in the presence of his relatives.[1]

But all of this bloody persecution and coercion did nothing save increase the anti-Austrian party and strengthen its

[1] These conditions were further shown in the first volume of the Statutes revised in 1550 by Ferdinand I. (brother of Charles V), King of the Romans, in which book the city of Trieste is officially mentioned as a Republic.

political power. This party in fact, under the leadership of Antonio Bonomo, in 1467 succeeded in conquering the communal administration and driving the mixed population from the city, and the city then returned to its former freedom.

The Emperor Frederick III, duke of Austria, would not endure this and sent one of his vicars immediately, a certain Lusgar (some historians call him Luogar), with one thousand Teuton mercenaries to restore the former conditions.

Lusgar and his troops stole into Trieste during the night; assaulted and sacked homes, made prisoners of the best citizens, and shut them up in the castle of Duino. Then, by means of every sort of violence, he forcibly secured a letter directed to the Emperor, signed by several citizens of Trieste, "in which they declared their renunciation of the rights guaranteed to the city by the pact of their 'spontaneous dedition.'"

But on August 15, 1467, suddenly the tocsin was sounded. This was the signal which had been decided upon. The people, once more led by Antonio Bonomo, rose up; put to flight the commissioner and his mercenaries; hanged on the battlements of the city hall fifteen magistrates who had burned the dwellings of the imperialistic patricians and solemnly reproclaimed the independence of Trieste!

The Emperor in a state of fury ground his teeth; wrung his hands and immediately sent another army to this same Lusgar and ordered him to punish every one within the rebellious city.

Bonomo and the people defended themselves desperately, but in the end the Teuton troops, well practiced in arms, overcame them; they burst in upon the city; they sacked it for three days; then they burned it. Many citizens fled (among whom was Bonomo), some to Istria and others to Venice. Those who could not escape were imprisoned, tortured or hanged.

Thus the order of the Emperor was obeyed to the limit of cruelty and destruction, so well obeyed that the chronicles registered that year "as the year of the destruction of Trieste" (1468).

With all of this his majesty — when afterward (1470) he deigned to officially visit the city which he had so subjugated — thought it prudent to send into exile 300 other citizens and to confiscate their goods.

The anti-imperial party was thus reduced to the lowest numbers and in fact was almost entirely destroyed. But it rose little by little, and there were frequent altercations between the citizens and the *milites theutonic.* To the ordinary corporal punishments were added that of pecuniary impositions against the citizens who "spoke ill of the Austrian sovereignty."

In 1485, Frederick III more than once attempted to annex Trieste to the Empire. The Triestians always forcibly resisted, "remembering that their city was Italian."

In 1508, at a public mass meeting, while an old man harangued a crowd of citizens, urging that it would be much better for Trieste to pass under the domination of the government of Venice, the citizens pulled down the imperial colors "into the mud of the ditch near the walls."

Also, after Charles V had given the city over to his brother Ferdinand in 1522, the Triestians never once forgot to feel and to re-assert themselves Italian. For example: the Imperial Chancellery in 1523 sent to the Commune of Trieste an act written in German. The Commune returned it to him writing with simple pride: *Cum latini simus linguam ignoramus theutonicam.* In 1524 the Imperial Chancellery "renewed this same offense." The Commune again rejected the act repeating with Italian pride: *Quia civitas Tergestina est in finibus et limitibus Italiae, omnes civis et ibidem oriundi habent proprium sermonem et idioma Italicum.* It was the evidence of their proud Italianity, but it was the last of the strong communal spirit. Trieste fell from her high estate, together with the other communes of Italy.

Only two things the Triestians conserved with tenacious jealousy: pride in their Roman origin, and the traditions of their communal autonomy. From every emperor they insisted on the confirmation of their ancient privileges. In 1564 they refused to accept the changes in the municipal

statutes, as the Archduke Charles wished. In 1660 they received as a *guest*, not as a ruler, the Emperor Leopold I, who had come to Trieste; on this occasion they thus designated themselves in Roman phrase as *Senatus Populusque Tergestinus*. Ughelli, who visited Trieste in the 17th century, observed that the Triestians "prided themselves on their Roman origin." And the historian Scussa, if he reminds us that the Commune of Trieste had kept records of the events; if he reminds us that the chief official of the city was presented with a baton as evidence of his command; if he calls to mind that in certain games they gave cross-bows as prizes to the winners, always adds that they used these things "as the Romans used them, of whom the Triestians considered themselves the descendants, and as of the same blood." In 1688 the Commune of Trieste collected in the great public square the relics of ancient Rome because they would testify with honor to the origin of the city. In 1694 the Commune decreed that the *History of Trieste*, by Ireneo della Croce —a stirring exaltation of the Romanism of Trieste — should be printed. And not a few of the aristocratic families of Trieste at that time used on their coat of arms the phrase *de stirpe quirita* to magnify the assumption of their Roman origin. Even up to 1727 — that is, 10 years after Charles VI, emperor of Austria, had declared Trieste to be a free port, profiting by the decadence of Venice — the Triestian patricians, sending an act to the imperial government, boasted of having been the descendants *plurimis ex equestri patricio ac consulari ordine familiis ad has extremas oras ex Urbe emigratis.*

In 1717 Trieste was declared a free port. She was connected with the lands behind her by commercial roads. She revived her traffic and was not long in becoming a teeming center of immigration. Thousands of Italians flocked there, especially from the north of Italy. But at the same time, thousands of Teutons, Illyrians, Greeks, and Jews came in; and they were so audacious, intriguing, and impertinent that, aided and protected by the Austrian government, they soon arrogated to themselves the right to combat the Italianity of the city with the end in view to

change, even to destroy the city's traditions, its spirit, its physiognomy, and even to alter its name.

Trieste resisted valorously. She was constrained, for example, after long opposition to accept the imperial nomination of one of her judges. She sent a protest to the emperor: "All that now remains for the city to do is to deplore forever her disgrace because of the non-observance of her laws."

Thus the latter part of the eighteenth century found Trieste full of strangers, it is true, immersed in business, sunk into a bourgeois opulence and without political pride; but above everything else one found it Italian. Italians were in the city councils, the schools, the academies, the theaters, the clubs, in every public place. The best citizens were Italian. In the field of letters, it is enough to remember Gian Rinaldo Carli, native of Capodistria but Triestian by adoption, author of the celebrated letter, *The Patria of Italians*, which with his appeal "We must become Italians or cease to be men" expressed for the first time — at the end of the second half of this same century — the concrete affirmation of the unity of Italy. In the field of action, one recalls the Triestian family Piatti, who were sacrificed at Naples for the glory of that Partenopean Republic which was one of the first and most brilliant episodes of the Risorgimento Italiano. Peter, father of the family Piatti, and his son Antonio died like heroes on the gallows. The mother Andreana Prosdocimi and the daughter Elizabeth were thrown into the prison of Santa Maria Apparente. The son Giuseppe, accorded grace on account of his youth, was locked up in the prison of Favignana. The son Pietro escaped and died of a broken heart in exile after a few days. These were the first martyrs, the first sacred witnesses of the new-born soul of Trieste.

V

The struggle for Italianity sustained with perseverance by the Triestians, Istrians, Dalmatians and Trentini against Austria, from the time of the treaty of Vienna 1815, until the Italian revolutions of 1848.

After the treaty of Vienna in 1815, the regions of the eastern boundaries of Italy — notwithstanding the political domination of Austria and the efforts made by the Austrian Government to destroy their national character—always maintained themselves Italian, and during the uprising their sons with filial love gave a splendid contribution of thought, of money and of blood to the struggles for the Patria.

In 1821, for example, not a few Neapolitan liberals took refuge in Trieste.

After 1821 the *Vendite carboniche* (committees of the Carbonari) worked zealously at Trieste and Istria, and with such fervor that the Carbonari counted proselytes even among the clergy. Indeed a decree of the Austrian government of August 20, 1823, placed upon the clergy the responsibility "of the political transgressions of the Istrian people."

In 1829 the Triestian Domenico Rossetti, poet, historian, archaeologist with the soul of a proud patrician, of the ancient Italian Communes, founded an Italian paper entitled *L'Archeografo Triestino* and in it censured the Emperor of Austria for the non-observance of the pacts; he accused the government of Austria of trying to denationalize the Italianity of Trieste. He encouraged the protests of the Triestians against the abuses of the government.

Pietro Kandler made an inquiry into the traditions of the Roman nobility of Trieste, the Roman magnificence of Pola, the surviving Roman palimpsests of Parenzo, the evidences of Roman power of the *X Italic Region;* the Roman palisades of the extreme eastern boundaries of Italy from the passes of Postumia to Fiume; and with the severe eloquence of history he proved to outsiders the deep Italianity of the region situated between the Julian Alps and the sea.

At Trieste, in 1833, a sea-captain, Giuseppe Sgarzolo was arrested on the charge of having had secret meetings with Italian conspirators on board his ship *Spartano*, and of having plotted against the life of Metternich.

Between 1834–36 a group of capitalists — a great part of whom were Italians — founded the *Lloyd-Austro-Hungarian*[1]

About this time Dr. A. Madonizza of Capodistria and Giovanni Orlandini, a bookseller of Trieste, founded another Italian newspaper called *La Favilla* which soon became a mouthpiece of their Italianity.[2]

In 1843 hundreds of Triestini went to Venice to take part in the opening of the railroads and the congresses; they even participated in the scientific ones and transformed them into ardent manifestations of Italianity.

In 1843, at Trieste, Verdi's operas *Nabucco*, *Lombardi*, and in 1844, *Ernani* (all of deep patriotic significance) were presented, provoking frantic demonstrations of Italianity.

In 1844 the propaganda of the society *Young Italy* at Trieste in Istria, was very active; so much so that the Austrian police hunted out four zealous leaders of the society, G. Berardi, F. Orioli, R. Carbonis, and G. Grozet, under the accusation of traveling "under different pretexts, for commerce and literature."

Also in 1844 the brothers Attilio and Emilio Bandiera, officers of the Austrian marine, deserted and went to

[1] The first ship of this company sailed for Constantinople on May 16, 1837. From that day the history of the *Lloyd-Austro-Hungarian* was a series of ever growing successes. Their ships traversed every sea in the world; from the Mediterranean to the Pacific; from the Red Sea to the Atlantic.

The *Lloyd-Austro-Hungarian* has always remained an Italian institution. The names of their steamships were Italian; their governing board was Italian; their sailors were Italian; their arsenals were Italian.

The office building of the *Lloyd-Austro-Hungarian* is one of the most sumptuous in Trieste, and every one attests to the Italianity of this institution.

[2] The first issue of this paper was published on July 31, 1836, with the motto, "Poca favilla gran fiamma seconda" (a great fire follows a small spark). For collaborators on the paper were the poet Francesco Dall' Ongaro, a priest of Mansuè (Oderzo); the poet Antonio Gazzoletti of Nago, near Riva, in the Trentino, and the poet Antonio Summa (the noted librettist of Verdi) of Carnia; the journalist Pacifico Valussi; the painter Giovanni Kandler; the novelist Caterina Percoto of Friuli, and Graziadio Ascoli of Goritz.

Ascoli became a glottologist, phonetician and philologist of worldwide fame. He was senator of the Kingdom of Italy (1829–1907).

Calabria — because Mazzini, whom they adored, advised them to go—for the purpose of arousing the people to the national cause. But they were betrayed, taken and were shot by the Bourbon soldiers in Cosenza. Trieste, even, at that time, offered a martyr: Giulio Canal, who was arrested by the Austrians as an accomplice, and died in 1845 in prison, on account of the moral and physical tortures to which he had been subjected.

In 1846 another great opera of Verdi, *Attila*, was presented at Trieste; it was of undoubted patriotic significance, and provoked new and frantic demonstrations of Italianity.

Trieste, as soon as she knew that Ferdinand II (Bourbon) on February 10th, 1848 had promulgated the Constitution in the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies — a Constitution followed by those of the Grand Duke of Tuscany, of Carlo Alberto and Pius IX and by the revolutionary movements in Vienna — gave herself up to enthusiastic manifestations of Italianity. The crowd, led by Leone Fortis, a Triestian journalist and dramatist, and Federico Seismit-Doda[1] ran jubilantly through the streets of the city singing hymns to liberty, burning the effigy of Metternich, the Austrian minister, and obliging the Teuton Bruck to spit on his effigy and to salute the Italian colors. In the Communal Theatre the people frantically recalled the artists who presented themselves on the stage wearing the tri-colored badges on their breasts, and waving a great Italian flag. In the chamber of commerce the crowd, during the night, decreed that the following day (March 17th) should be a national festival and closed the stores, government offices and the board of trade. They changed the names of places of public resort. For example: the Theatre Philodramatic was called the Teatro Costitutionale; the Hotel Metternich was called Albergo Nazionale; the Caffé Stella Polare was called Caffè Gioberti; the Caffé Tommasi was called Caffè Tommaséo.

A national guard was organized. A group of patriots asked for and received a ship from the *Lloyd Austro-*

[1] Federico Seismit-Doda of Ragusa (Dalmatia) was twice minister of finance of the kingdom of Italy (1825–1893).

Hungarian, and with it went to Venice to bring the joyful news of the Constitution to their brothers of the opposite shore. In a mass meeting they declared as "infamous" the annexation of 1815. A provisional municipal assembly protested against the Diet of Frankfort which had planned the annexation of Trieste to the German Confederation, affirming that Trieste was Italian; sent an address of sympathy to the Revolutionary Constituents in Vienna; made a programme in which they demanded Italian schools and the recognition of the Italian language in the government offices; and the creation, if not of an entire University, at least of an Italian Faculty of Law. And the *Association of Triestians* asked to have the pacts of 1382 restored by which Trieste should be annexed to Italy, or that it might at least be declared independent of the other provinces which were subject to Austria, and also that it should have its own statutes, its own judiciary and all of the privileges of an autonomous and perfectly free city. The same society moreover rejected a proposal of homage to the Emperor and vowed to burn the Austrian ships anchored in the port.

Meanwhile Lombardo-Veneto rose up in revolution.

At the five days of Milan and in the siege of Venice, Irredentist Italians were not lacking. It is enough to recall Giuseppe Revere from Trieste, a well known poet and dramatist, one of the collaborators of the journal *Italia del Popolo* of Mazzini, in whose columns Garibaldi published his first appeal to the youth of Italy.

Also it is sufficient to recall the following episode:

The Austrian governor, Pallfly, was driven out of Venice and fled toward Trieste. In crossing, the ship on which he was sailing encountered the one on which Seismit-Doda was sailing to Venice. The following episode was narrated by this same Seismit-Doda in a page vibrant with Italianity:

> The ships neared each other; as soon as the voice could be heard, we demanded, *What news from Venice?* They responded with a single word, *Republic!* I had strength to cry, *Viva San Marco! Viva la Republica!* but the sailors did not have this

same force. They fell on their faces crying and lifting up their hands to heaven in gratitude for such news. The greater part of these were Dalmatians. *Viva San Marco! Viva la Republica!* and these cries stabbed the hearts of those who heard them on the other ship and who had witnessed the frenzy of our holy enthusiasm.

Then the ship directed its course toward Trieste, retook its way, slowly and silently like a funeral ship; when the two ships, symbolizing life and death, were separating, a shot from a rifle on our ship was the first to salute the Republic of Venice. After fifty years the flag of St. Mark again waved on the Adriatic, and hurrahs resounded in the air. That shot, Venetians, came from a Dalmatian rifle; it was fired by a Dalmatian! A never-to-be-forgotten event, if we remember that the last shots of salutation to the dying republic of St. Mark fifty years ago were fired by the Dalmatians on the Piazzetta, when Venice was obliged to send them away by force, weeping, because she did not wish uselessly to sacrifice them in her last desperate defense against Austria. Venetians, as we were brothers in the days of your glory, thus are we today, now that the new era promises greater glories to us all.

The Dalmatians, in exchange for this, will give to you their undying love. Because, for fifty years — you must know this publicly — for fifty years in a little unknown church of Dalmatia are buried the flags of the Republic of St. Mark to which Dalmatian tears rendered funeral honors in 1797. The earth was the altar of the flags; but our hearts are the altars of our affection for you.

I feel myself an Italian, even though born in Dalmatia. In the affections which you have shown to my great compatriot and master — Niccolò Tommaséo — I see the proof of the indissoluble union of Italy and Dalmatia.

Hagenaer, deputy from Trieste to the Assembly of Vienna, exclaimed, "I am the deputy from Italy."

A Teuton journalist — all this was in 1848 — alluding to the geographic form of Italy, malignantly asserted that he did not know how a boot was made. *La Gazzetta di Trieste* taught him this in a pungent article, in which the writer showed, among other things, that "Istria is in fact the pulling strap of the Italian boot, as Metternich well understood — he, in fact, in order to pull up such a boot, had first made sure of the strap."

And after Curtatone[1] and Montanara, the *Journal of Trieste* ventured to write:

To placate the spirits of the dead of Curtatone and Montanara we can do nothing but push on toward the Italian rainbow. From the River Ticino to the Mincio; from the River Piave to the Isonzo, as far as the smile of the Italian skies sends its last ray of light!

The same paper of Trieste, expressing the deepest sentiments of the Triestians, added:

The only enemy that Italy has today [1848] is the Teuton. I am not speaking of individuals nor of people, but of that attitude which ancient interests and modern ambitions have persuaded the Teutons to assume. But of what importance is it that Germany does not want Italy to be victorious? Who cares about this? The Italians want it; the Italians have sworn to conquer, and that settles it. Germany protests; the Bavarian peasants can put on their backs the military uniform of the Austrians, and pass over the Alps. Italy will at least give them also a pious burial!

And the Triestian journal *Il Costituzionale*, the liberal organ of Trieste (this still in 1848), turned to the Triestians with the following appeal:

If we would wish to be different from that which God made us — that is, Italians — it would be a crime in the face of this same God; a crime in the face of our sacred dead, who thought that they had lived and died Italians; a crime, O people! to our sons, whom we must leave with an added heritage, such as we received when we were born. If any other country has had, or now has more misfortunes, no other land under the sun has ever borne a better name, has had a more glorious, a more majestic past than this your land, linked to Italy by chains formed by the hand of God.

There were many other manifestations — led by Nicolò di Rin of Capodistria and Costantino Cúmano of Trieste,

[1] At Curtatone (province of Mantua), on May 29, 1848, 40,000 Austrian soldiers commanded by Radetzky encountered 6,500 Italian students, the greater part of whom were Tuscans, Neapolitans, Modenese and Reggians and among whom were not a few Triestians and Trentini. After a combat which lasted six hours, the students, who fought like young lions, were overcome by numbers and made prisoners, leaving on the ground many dead and wounded.

men of tenacious faith, and proudly averse to Austrian domination; and by the young Francesco Hermet, an ardent patriot, and the journalist Giulio Solitro — which demonstrated the Italian sentiments of Trieste in 1848. There was a sharp hand to hand struggle between the Mazzinians or liberals and "the policy mixed with the foreign mercenaries," and many were wounded and killed. Some Triestians even attempted to raise the Italian flag on the castle. Others, arriving in boats from Venice to Trieste, landed, crying, "Long live the Republic of Venice and Trieste!"

Thus the national movement was always on the increase in the Italian region governed by Austria. The Austrian government was harassed. To combat this movement, it hurried to "import" other strangers "famished and faithful as dogs." The government sent more than 15,000 Teutons and Slavs to take up residence in Trieste alone in 1848, and gave to them every sort of protection and confided to them, with astounding insolence, the most important and lucrative local employments.

A city journal greeted these strangers with the following ingenuous but significant words:

> Long live everybody! But bear in mind that this [the city of Trieste] is Italian ground; Italian is the smiling sea which washes its shores; Italian are our souls. You hold in your hearts the treasure of love for your native land which we respect and admire. But you meanwhile must respect our love for Italy, because we are, and always will be Italians.

But *Il Costituzionale* was more explicit; it accused the Austrian government of favoring and defending Slavism in Trieste after having favored Germanism.

La Gazzetta di Trieste corroborated the accusation, writing bitterly:

> What remains to us citizens? The public offices and schools have been invaded by others; thought has been dominated by another tongue; the Triestians must nourish themselves on the odors which come from the kitchens of others, and they alone — the Triestians — are the only strangers in their own city! Addio, gentlemen, to whom we have given hospitality; whom our fathers

received with so much, with *too* much faith. Promise us, gentlemen, that at least we may have a little spot in our own cemetery.

What a solid basis of truth the affirmations of the Triestian newspaper had in 1858 was shown by two posthumous documents, the memorial sent in the name of Trieste in 1859 to the Congress at Paris, and the pamphlet by Valussi and Costantino Ressmann (another Triestian and later Italian Ambassador to Constantinople and Paris), published in 1861 and diffused throughout Europe.

The first said:

> Austria, with the intrusion of the Germans and other strangers in Trieste, placing them in all important positions, even to seating them in our municipal councils; ordering and undoing at their own pleasure our interests according to her own ends; and with German schools and Slavic priests, employees of every race, is attempting to corrupt and make us forget our Italian nationality

The second said:

> In 1848 and also after, seeing that Nature had taught the Triestians to be Italians, the Austrian Government brought every effort to bear against anything that was Italian. It spent immense sums to corrupt the populace, making use of the lowest classes to persecute all those whom they thought were in sympathy with Italy. Denunciations, perquisitions, personal persecutions, imprisonments, law-suits, arbitrary expulsions, violations of every sort against Italian sentiments, form the history of these latter thirteen years.

But not only in Trieste, in 1848, did the fight for Italianity assume vast proportions. In some cities of Dalmatia a civic guard was formed. At Spálato the people liberated from prison Antonio Baiamonti and Pietro Savo, two ardent defenders of the Italian cause.

The people of Trent, on March 19, 1848, boldly raised the Italian tri-color, defied the shots of the Austrian pickets, destroyed the office of finance, then ran to the city hall and demanded that a commission be sent at once to Vienna to ask the immediate separation of Trentino from the German Tyrol and its annexation to Lombardo-Veneto. The following day, March 20, 1848, the municipality of Trent

established the national guard and sent a patriotic appeal to the citizens in which they expressed the wish that the example of Trent should be followed by all of Trentino. In fact at Ala, Rovereto, Riva, and other cities and in the valleys, the inhabitants of Trentino hoisted the Italian flag and decorated their breasts with the tri-colored cockade.

On April 4, 1848, Tommaséo sent a patriotic manifesto to the people in which he incited them to fight and to conquer in the name of Italy.

On the 6th of the same month, from Brescia, General Allemandi sent a proclamation to the brothers of Trentino in which he urged them to unite with his volunteers to drive the foreigner from Italy.

And the young Trentini, organizing a *Trentino Legion*, a corps of *Franchi Cacciatori* (hunters) and another of *Guide del Tirolo* (Tyrol guides), went to the defense of the Patria singing a hymn which the Trentian poet Antonio Gazzoletti wrote for the occasion.

The trumpets sound,
The muskets are ready,
Our dear Patria
Calls us to arms.

We follow the files
Of Carlo Alberto.
Death to the Austrians!
Long live the king!

Meanwhile the Austrian government proclaimed martial law in Trent, commanding the citizens to bring their arms to the Castle under penalty of death, prohibiting all gatherings of more than two persons on the street, abolishing the national guard, arresting the most prominent patriots, among whom were Gaetano Manci, Matteo Thum, Giuseppe Testi, Pietro Sizzo.

In answer to this, Gazzoletti, Angelo Ducati, Sigismondo Manci, Giovanni Danielli, Lorenzo Festi and Giambattista Zenelli, all Trentini, went to Valleggio and presented an address to Carlo Alberto in which the Trentino solemnly consented to be annexed to Piedmont. An identical de-

mand was presented to Carlo Alberto by the Trentini Vittore Ricci and Giovanni Rizzi.

On April 15, 1848, there was a skirmish at the Castle Toblino between Italians and Austrians. Twenty-one Italian volunteers, all young men, remained prisoners of the Austrians. They were conducted to Trent and were presented to the Austrian commander of the garrison, Col. Zobel, who told them to prepare for death without delay.

These young fellows passed the night in the open air in the moat of the castle on some hay. Two Franciscan monks comforted them. At the roll of the drums, a squadron of Austrian soldiers appeared at the opening of the moat. The victims were divided into two groups. Then the execution began. In the presence of their comrades the young men of the first group were blindfolded; but they tore off the bandages and threw them away crying, *Long live Italy!* There was a volley. After a few minutes, a second volley, and all was over!

The prisoners taken by the Austrians on May 29, 1848, in the battles of Curtatone and Montanara were sent across Trentino as above mentioned to the opposite side of the Alps. The inhabitants did everything to minimize their sufferings during the stops on their way. From the windows of the houses of Trent — which were filled with weeping citizens crying "Addio, Italian brothers!"—they were showered with money and bread. Along the streets they were given wine, brandy, tobacco, sausages and cheese. There was a truly fraternal demonstration of patriotism which was all the more audacious because it was made in the presence of the Austrian soldiers who were trembling with rage. At Botzen the prisoners were given a cordial reception. This was repeated at Bressanone and continued up to Brenner Pass, the highest peak of the Rhaetian Alps (2,022 meters).

At that point — thus says Tarugi, one of the prisoners — there was a boundary stone; on this everyone wrote his name. We kissed it with enthusiasm, as if to say good bye to Italy the moment we placed our feet on foreign soil; or because we felt in our hearts the hope that the day would come in which our country would regain its natural boundary.

In the same month (May 1848) the Trentini were invited by the Austrian Government to participate in the discussions of the Diet of Tyrol. They energetically refused, believing that their participation would be dangerous to the Italians of Tyrol, and in open contradiction to their rights of nationality and language which the constitution had guaranteed to them. On the contrary they sent deputies to the German parliament to demonstrate the rights of Italians in that assembly. Particularly courageous and characteristic was the speech of the deputy from Siessen, who threw a last free lance in favor of Italianity in the meeting of June 31, 1848:

The following is a part of his speech:

I wish I could know — said the orator — if the Italian Tyrol is called *Italian Tyrol* because it is inhabited by Germans! I wish I might know if the four German cooks, innkeepers and employees who live there could be called the German element! If you wish to make an enumeration, I can assure you that you will find at Milan and Rome a larger German element than there is in Rovereto. And why in this case don't you annex also Rome and Milan to the German confederation?

It has been said to us, moreover, gentlemen, that the Italian Tyrolese deputies with their participation in this assembly have recognized that they belong to Germany. Certainly they recognize the fact of this union; but they have wished to break our right to this union, and to obtain this result they should have come here. If they had refused to elect their deputies, who would have come here to defend the rights of their nationality? You have heard that the orator Prato has expressed himself with difficulty. Now, I ask you, if the Italians of the southern Tyrol had been able to select a person who could have spoken the German language correctly, would they not have chosen him? The fact is they had no one, and they could not find anyone, simply because they are Italians. It has been said to us that this national assembly must be German and not Italian. Let it be. But if the assembly is to be German, do not oblige the Italians to send to it Italian deputies. Let them send their deputies elsewhere to an Italian Diet or whenever their Patria calls them.

Finally the Trentini sent their deputies to Vienna with instructions to insist upon the separation of Trentino from

the Tyrol, and at the same time they sent a petition to the constituency with 46,000 names, in which they asked that "the administration and parliamentary separation of the districts of Trent and Rovereto from the German part of the province of Tyrol should be established, and that all of the powers based upon the new system of nationality should be equally distributed among them."

VI

The Trentini, the Triestians, the Istrians and the Dalmatians battle for the Roman Republic, which is under the leadership of the Triumvirate, Mazzini, Saffi and Armellini, and is defended by Garibaldi against the Pope, and for the Republic of Venice, which is led by Manin and Tommaséo and is defended by General Guglielmo Pepe against Austria (1849).

Numerous were the Trentini, Triestians, Istrians, and Dalmatians who went to the defense of Rome in 1849, "to seal with their blood"— so says Guerrazzi — "the pact of family which binds all Italians to the Eternal City." It will suffice to say that of the 400 defenders who fell in the memorable battle of June 29, 1849 (the last in which Garibaldi fought for the life and honor of the Roman Republic) 50 were Trentini and Triestians.

After the epic fight and the glorious defeat, the majority of the volunteers who followed the Hero to his unhappy retreat were Triestians, Trentini, Istrians, and Dalmatians. The Trentini were: Edoardo Negri, Francesco Mattedi, Pietro Bertelli, Achille Bevilacqua, Pietro Cavali, Don Pietro Casanova, Carlo Marzari, the engineer Domenico Dicio, the brothers Pilade and Narciso Bronzetti.[1] Among the Triestians were the poet Giuseppe Revere,[2] Filippo

[1] For the complete list see *The Trentini in the Risorgimento* (uprising), by Dr. Levio Marchetti.

[2] He was the last — with Dr. Saglioso, Francesco Dall'Ongaro and Aurelio Saffi — to leave Rome.

Zamboni,[1] Giacomo Venezian,[2] Sansoni Levi (intimate friend of Garibaldi), and Giovanni Bruffel.

Still more numerous were the Trentini, Triestians, Istrians and Dalmatians who, after the fall of the Roman Republic, hastened to the defense of the Republic of Venice under the leadership of Manin and Tommaséo. For that occasion they even formed a special legion called the *Dalmato-Istriana.*

And from every shore — thus wrote the young Triestian Attilio Tamaro — were brought tributes of life and genius; of energy and of heroism to the resuscitated Republic of St. Mark. No episode has incarnated — in a line so simple and representative — that flocking of the Adriatic people toward the reborn splendor of St. Mark, so well as the following, which I myself heard told with profound emotion:

As soon as the struggle began between the Republic and Radetzky, two young Dalmatians presented themselves to the Doge Daniele Manin, and one of them said to him in pure Venetian dialect:

Our father has sent us to defend St. Mark. He said to us that he had heard that the Lion of St. Mark has reawakened, and of his three sons he sends two to defend him. He said to us —"Salute the Doge, and say to him that if your father were not so old he also would have come to kiss his hand, to defend him."

These two young men took part in the siege, showing great valor.

Among the Trentini were: Captain Federico Martini, Giovan Battista Adami, Domenico Bonetti, Bartolomeo Malfatti and Tommaso Sar (these two latter were remembered in the documents of that epoch for the valor which they showed in the "most dangerous moments"). The following were Triestians: the journalist and dramatist Leone Fortis, Giovanni Orlandini (the old editor

[1] Zamboni and Piero Pieri were the last on the battle field saving the flag, which they consigned to the city of Rome, capital of Italy after 1870. Garibaldi wrote to Zamboni: "You saved the flag of the Italian youths at the risk of your precious life."

[2] Venezian fought heroically at Rome and was seriously wounded. He breathed his last on July 2, 1849, in the arms of his friend and fellow citizen, the poet Revere. His mother hurried to him but found him dead, and shortly afterward she died of grief.

of the journal *La Favilla* and chief magistrate of the provisional government of Venice), Filippo Coen, Francesco Erberti, Costantino Cúmano, Samuele Romanin (teacher of Venetian history in the chair founded by the new Republic), Francesco Poropat, Arturo Zanetti, Pietro Romano, Francesco Herbert and the painter Giuseppe Gattesi. The Istrians were Nicolò Vergottini, Captain Marcantonio Borisi who, in a bold sortie from Mestre, took several cannon from the Austrians, Alessandro Almerigotti, Alessandro Godina, Giuseppe Dragicchio, Giuseppe Rubinisch, Pietro Scarboncich, Luigi Ritozzo, the brothers Giovanni and Lodovico Almerigotti, Giovanni Bevilacqua (the latter fought like a lion under the fortress of Montedoro, and three times at Campalto, and more than twenty times from rafts). Of the Dalmatians it will suffice to call to mind Seismit-Doda, and that most illustrious of all, Niccolò Tommaséo, who was minister of public instruction in the Republic of St. Mark.

VII

The Trentini, Triestians, Istrians and Dalmatians in defense of their Italianity from 1850 to 1858. Their filial contribution of blood to the Second War of Liberation of Italy against Austria (1859).

The struggle for Italianity, after 1849, continued with the same zeal as at first in Trentino, at Trieste, in Istria and in Dalmatia, notwithstanding the severe preventive and repressive measures of the Austrian police.

On August 20, 1850, for example, Giuseppe Verdi went to Trieste, and the great master was received by the citizens with rejoicings.

In the same year the Emperor Francis Joseph went there. "But the reception which he received"—thus wrote the Sardinian Consul to his Government—"was very cool; indeed it was glacial; one did not hear an *Evviva* during the whole day."

On August 30, 1851, the imperial and royal representatives of the Austrian government in Goritz, irritated by the

appearance of the characteristic clothes of the Italians, published the following "notification" which is a choice sample of their petty tyranny:

The wearing of clothes which by their singularity distinguishes them in a surprising manner from the other inhabitants of the country, and which, in this singularity, carries with them a certain sign of arrogance, is not to be tolerated. One also sees among those thus dressed the wide brimmed brown hat, which for some time has been in great fashion in this section of the empire combined with clothes of the same color. We are thoroughly convinced that the inhabitants of the united countries of Goritz and Gradisca wear these clothes solely for the purpose of showing sympathy and imitating others, and for this reason we wish you to put aside anything which would cast suspicion upon your motives. We recommend therefore that the inhabitants of Goritz and Gradisca discontinue the use of such clothes and other distinctive signs. We wish you to regard this suggestion as a friendly admonition, otherwise we shall be obliged to impute to the violators of this a perverse tendency, which we will suppress with vigor and punish without pity.

The most ardent patriots, tiring of such harassments, decided to start a revolutionary movement which was to burst out in Trieste on March 1, 1853, and from there was to spread to the other Irredentist cities. The Austrian Government discovered the plot and hastened to prepare for it, increasing the number of spies, augmenting the garrisons, portioning out soldiers to the barracks, doubling the guards, and increasing the patrol in every direction, besides ordering perquisitions and arrests. The young Dalmatian Carlo Boscowich was exiled and took refuge in Piedmont; among the newspapers suppressed "for political reasons" was the *Journal of Goritz*, founded by Carlo Favetti, and *L'Eco dell'Isonzo* of Gradisca, directed by the distinguished citizen Federico Comelli; prominent citizens were condemned to hard labor; and Guiseppe Grioli was sentenced to twelve years imprisonment "for the liberal propaganda which he directed in Dalmatia."

In 1856, Antonio Gazzoletti and many others thought to call the attention of the coming Congress of Paris to Trentino, and by means of Cavour to obtain its separation

from the German federation. One of the Irredentists went especially to Turin to confer with the minister. This latter expressed his sympathy for the Trentini, assuring them that he would not let an occasion pass when he could speak in favor of their national aspirations. Demetrio Livaditi founded the paper called *La Ciarla* at Trieste where *Il Pungolo* and another called *Quel che si vede e quel che non si vede* were already published. Among those who wrote for these were the poet Arnaldo Fusinato and Leone Fortis. The Austrian government ordered the arrest of Fortis and suppressed the journals. In Istria, *Il Popolano d'Istria* was published by Michele Facchinetti, author of a national prayer which was committed to memory and which finished thus: "O God! make me love my native land, but make my love and respect for her enlarge my sympathies toward others, in order that all may be linked together in a chain of peace and happiness." Tommaséo wrote letters and volumes showing how the hearts of Dalmatia always beat for Italy.

Thus we reach the year 1859. Austria attacked little Piedmont, which allied itself to France. At the onset of the war other volunteers gathered from Trieste, from Istria,[1] from Friuli — and the flower of Trentino youths ran to the defense of the Patria, notwithstanding the fact that the Austrian bayonets were massed on the frontiers; notwithstanding the fact that dangers of every sort awaited them.

The Austrian Government, on June 7, 1859, in vain decreed, in the name of the emperor, that the country of Trent, on the second conscription, must furnish one thousand men. The young men eluded this by flocking under the banners of Victor Emanuel II and Garibaldi.

Besides this, a Trentian deputation presented to Victor Emanuel II on the battlefield the following address:

Now that at the side of your generous ally, the Emperor of France, on a road sown at every step with victories and blessings, you advance toward the Italian provinces redeemed in your name, permit, O Sire, that the Italians of the province of Trent present

[1] Professor Antonio Coiz, native of Faedils (Friuli), who was teaching in Istria, gathered his pupils together and they all enrolled themselves under the Italian leaders. At Turin the wealthy Goritzian Francesco Verzegnasse placed himself and all his wealth at the disposal of the volunteers.

themselves to you by means of us, to repeat that the cross of Savoy is not less worshipped in their mountains than in other parts of upper Italy; that in the province of Trent you are also awaited and yearned for as their Liberator and King. We fully realize, O Sire, the gravity of the exceptional circumstances in which our country finds itself in the face of your glorious enterprise. But precisely because we are monstrously chained to Germany, we feel with greater fervor that we are Italians, and we wish to be more closely bound to the cause of our brothers whom you defended with such loyalty and valor. Heaven, O Sire, will not cease for an instant to make your arms victorious; but may the triumph and glory — that will come after the accomplishment of the great enterprise — not be saddened by the cries of Italians still bent under a foreign yoke.

In this same year, 1859, the women of Istria sent the flag of the 37th infantry to Victor Emanuel II with an address in which they said among other things:

We, the women of Istria, send and offer this flag to you as a pledge of our tears. This standard brings good fortune. We remember that Istria has always been Italian from the time in which ancient Rome confided to it the guardianship of the most envied pass into Italy.

In the victorious campaigns the volunteers of the Irredentist Italian regions covered themselves with glory.

The Trentian lieutenant, Leopoldo Martini, fell at San Martino, June 24, 1859, while fearlessly guiding his company of Bersaglieri to an assault.

The Trentian Narciso Bronzetti, captain of the third company of the first regiment of Alpine Hunters, fought valorously at the side of Garibaldi at Varese and San Fermo. Near Seriate, on June 8, 1859, with only ninety-four volunteers, he put to flight fifteen hundred Austrian soldiers. "With men of such heroism," Garibaldi said, "one can attempt anything; Italy must always remember them."

In the battle of Treponti (June 15, 1859) Bronzetti performed acts worthy of an epopee. A first Austrian ball wounded his right arm, causing his sword to fall from his hands. 'The brave fellow caught it up with his left hand

and shook it on high crying, "Go on!" and he continued to fight and to cry, "Forward!" as long as he could.

Forward! Forward!
The hero cried; and, the right arm broken
By a ball, with the other he raised his sword,
And *forward!* Another ball broke even the
Left arm, and *forward!* And thus all bloody
He ran against the enemy!

Finally a third ball struck him in the side and mortally wounded him.

Until a third ball
Penetrated his side, and even then he took two steps,
And *forward, forward always!*
He cried to his followers, falling.

He was then taken to Brescia to the house of his friend, Basilio Maffezzoli, where Major Ferrari carried to him the silver medal of military bravery. "Garibaldi," he said to him, "has sent you this medal of honor for the battle of Seriate. He wishes worthily to reward you for that act of yesterday." The dying hero kissed the medal and breathed his last, smiling, while Major Ferrari was reading the letter to him which Garibaldi had sent:

Dearest Bronzetti,—You are certainly beyond any eulogy, and you have justly merited the title of "Hero of Heroes" of our column. Your courage surpasses the gravity of your wounds, and you will yet be returned to your companions at arms.

Receive a brotherly embrace from,

Your friend,

GIUSEPPE GARIBALDI.

The military cross of Savoy and the title of Major were awarded to the memory of Bronzetti.

At the end of the war Garibaldi, in an address to the Trentini, tried to interpret the national sentiments toward those generous ones, writing:

There were hundreds and hundreds of the fellow citizens of Bronzetti who distinguished themselves in the sacred war, and not one word has been said to give them recognition of national

gratitude! I trust my feeble words may be able to supply in part this involuntary forgetfulness, and to make us remember some of the most noble and generous Italian families, who have never failed to assist us in our expectations of redemption.

And the Trentini responded to Garibaldi:

As much as an Italian country oppressed by strangers can exult, the Trentini rejoice in the words you have spoken in its praise; and it thanks and blesses you from the depths of its misfortunes. Its blood has been poured out, and the bitter disillusions, all of the grief it has suffered, it can endure more easily now that we have received your encomiums and commendations.

The council of Trent, the councils of the other important cities of Trentino (Rovereto, Ala, Tione, Condino, Levico, Strigno) claimed from Vienna their annexation to Veneto, "annexation urged because of the national sentiments of Trentino and also because of its needs and its interests." With this demand the Trentini hoped to share the status of Venetia "when this province should be united to Italy."

In December, 1859, the Trentini also drew up a memorial (which was presented afterward to the European congress) in which they asked that Trieste, whose liberty was imperiled, be declared a free city, and part of the Italian confederation, "as it seemed to them that Veneto might be."

VIII

The Trentini, the Triestians, the Istrians in the campaign of The Thousand. Their filial contribution of blood during the entire War for the Liberation of Southern and Central Italy (1860). The fierce reaction of the Austrians. The sums of money gathered from the Istrians for the national cause. The Triestian women present an Italian flag to Garibaldi (1860).

Garibaldi, in preparing the expedition of *The Thousand*, opened a national subscription for a million rifles. At Trieste, in Trentino, in eastern Friuli, in Istria, as in every other part of Italy, this news awakened an extraordinary en-

thusiasm. In the cafés, in the public places and in private nothing else was talked of. In many towns in Istria the Italian flag was seen flying. On the walls appeared placards exalting Garibaldi and Victor Emanuel II and denouncing the Austrian government and its spies.

The police recommenced perquisitions and repressions. At Trieste, for instance, they sequestered more than three thousand rifles in the house of a certain Brul and violently repressed an anti-Austrian demonstration. At Goritz, to prevent the Italians from making demonstrations, the police prohibited the daily promenade on the Corso. Martial law was declared in many cities. The goods of the Trentini and Istrians who had emigrated to Italy were confiscated. An imperial decree ordered the sentinels of patrol to "exercise the greatest freedom in the use of arms" against persons who attempted to pass the frontiers.

But notwithstanding this, the Trentini succeeded in expressing their sentiments in a plebiscitary document abridged into the following formula: "The undersigned declare their desire for the annexation of their country to the constitutional Kingdom of Victor Emanuel II." In Istria a bit of popular poetry went the rounds in which the Bourbon and the court of Vienna were placed in ridicule. Not a few guns were sent to Italy.

On the morning of May 6, 1860, on the ships *Piedmont* and *Lombardy*, which were sailing from the fatal rock of Quarto with Garibaldi and *The Thousand*, there were among the Trentini: Antonio Armani, Oreste Baratieri, Ergisto Bezzi, Tomaso Bolcego, Domenico Toller called Giacomo Costa, Giovanni Dalla Costa, Antonio Fattori, Giuseppe Fontana, Enrico Isnenghi, Giuseppe Leonardi, Filippo Manci, Quirino Moiola, Pietro Martori, Anselmo Sterchele, Filippo Tranquillini, Camillo Zancani and Attilio Zanotti (Enoch Bezzi, brother of Ergisto, Count Francesco Martini and Luigi Marcabruni, who were not in time to embark at Quarto, rejoined Garibaldi at Milazzo), Francesco Bidischini of Friuli Goritzian, Marziano Ciotti of Gradisca and others. At Trieste an entire enrollment committee was captured. Many Triestians could not join the glorious expedition of

The Thousand because of the great rigor of the Austrian government.

Giuseppe Fontana and Camillo Zancani were the first of their company (the fifth) to climb the memorable hill of Calatafimi and at their left were Filippo Manci, Filippo Tranquillini and Ergisto Bezzi, called the Three Musketeers. These three were also the first at the assault of Palermo. And Enrico Isnenghi and Giuseppe Leonardi, notwithstanding their wounds, continued to fight on the barricades of that city.

Giuseppe Caesar Abba[1] in few words gives a graphic picture of these, his Trentini military fellow soldiers. For example here is Zancani: "With his temples already whitening and the deep wrinkles from the nose to the angles of his mouth showing that he had known sorrow for a long time, he carried an almost cheerful air and seemed to talk continually about himself; cheerful and always seeming to say, forward!"

Zanotti: "Always young and beautiful, always generous-hearted."

Isnenghi: "Simple as the water from the highest spring, humble as a little monk in everything, as those to whom St. Francis said his gentle words as he traveled."

Tranquillini: "Blossom of joy and of courtesy worthy to be in an epic poem."

Manci: "So virginal was the refinement of his face that had it not been for the vigor of his body it would have been said that he was a girl in a Garibaldian uniform; and he so courted danger that if there were a contest as to who should take a risk, he was capable of fighting his best friend in order to win it."

Ergisto Bezzi: "He seemed to be Ferruccio detached from a sixteenth century painting, coming back to life to see what we were doing after we had sung with Mameli that *our hearts and our hands were like his* (Ferruccio's). Cusiana

[1] Abba was one of the most heroic of *The Thousand.* Afterward he became the incomparable illustrator of the famous expedition, author of several other historical works, and a great educator. Silent and modest, he lived in dignified poverty, not showing pride or ostentation in the service that he had rendered his Country. He was named senator of the kingdom of Italy in 1910, five months before his death (1838–1910).

in Trent, his native village, should be sacred ground if only for his deeds, and worthy to be annexed to Italy."

Many other Trentini rejoined Garibaldi in Sicily and followed him to southern Italy, and in all of his campaigns up to the time that the Bourbon was completely defeated. It will suffice to call to mind Pilade Bronzetti, brother of Narciso, the *Hero of Heroes*. At Milazzo (July 20, 1860), in a bloody hand-to-hand struggle between the Garibaldians and the Bourbons, Pilade Bronzetti, who had the rank of major, took three pieces of artillery from the enemy. And later, at Castle Morone with only 270 men, for eleven continuous hours he kept back the assault of 4,000 Bourbons, until he was wounded by a bayonet and struck by a ball in the chest and fell with his brandishing sword, never to rise again.

> Disdaining
> Any surrender — a new Leonidas —
> Waving aloft the sword of his brother,
> He hurled himself to death on the heap
> Of his dead comrades.

Garibaldi, announcing the fact in the order of the day, to his legion, said:

> At Castle Morone, Pilade Bronzetti, emulating his brother, repeated a deed which history will certainly place side by side with those accomplished by Leonidas and Fabius.

And in his *Memoirs* Garibaldi added:

> Near the immortal families of the Cairoli and De Benedetti are many others for whom Italy mourns, and among these we must place the family of the Bronzetti. The eldest brother fell fighting against the Austrians at Treponti; the second fell not less heroically at Castle Morone. There remains a third for the venerable parents, and this one, with their consent, is ready to give his life to Italy.

In the liberation of Ancona, Leopoldo Tonini and Captain Venturi were not a little distinguished. The latter also did much to promote an insurrection in the pontifical state.

In fact in 1860 the Trentini fought everywhere: in the Piedmontese army as well as in the army of Central and South-

ern Italy. There was not a brigade complete without its quota of Trentini. For example: we find 22 in the Modena brigade; 29 in the Reggio brigade; 101 in the Bologna brigade; almost 100 in the Vignola battalion and 120 in the southern army — about 500 in all. There were very few of the Italian provinces which gave an equal number. Taking as a base the proportion of ordinary conscription, which in Italy was then twenty-five for every thousand, the Trentino with a population of 330,000, would have furnished 825 soldiers. It, however, furnished 500; that is, two thirds of the ordinary quota. In addition to this, one must remember that Trentino was forced to support the burden of the Austrian conscription.

Also the quota furnished by Trentino to the heroic legion of *The Thousand* was altogether flattering. In the proportion of 1,000 to 25,000,000 inhabitants (thus Italy was counted in 1860) Trentino, in proportion to its population, should have given only about 13 men. It gave however, 17.

Although in lesser numbers, the Triestians and Istrians hastened to enroll themselves under the Italian flag in 1860 and distinguished themselves by their heroism equally with their other Irredentist brothers. In the assault upon Perugia, for instance, a company composed entirely of Triestians and Istrians captured the papal garrison of not less than 8,000 Irish mercenaries (September 18, 1860).

Moreover large sums of money were collected and continued to be collected from the people of the Irredentist regions to carry on the war. The Triestian committee for the aid of Garibaldi wrote to the committee of Milan:

> Trieste was the generous victim in 1849 at Rome; and this year (1860) it has its sons in the army of the magnanimous *Re Galantuomo* (so Victor Emanuel II was and is called) and under the flag of the invincible Garibaldi. But it will not cease in its efforts to do everything possible to elude the restless vigilance of the satraps of Austria.

And what vigilance, truly, it was! Michele Buono, organizer of a secret committee of enrollment in Trieste, was condemned to death (this was changed afterward to 20

years of hard labor). A sailor of Pola, who in the public square had shouted "*Viva L'Italia!*" was immediately killed with a blow from the sabre of an Austrian officer. At Pirano a laborer by the name of Mistare was shot by an Austrian sentinel for an expression of his sympathy with Italy. The families of deserters were tormented in every way. The Austrian government obliged them even to "reimburse it" for the price of the deserters' uniforms. And it promised a fat price in money to any soldier who would reveal the names of those who incited to desertion and who criticized the government. In Trentino, the Austrian Commissary, Count Hohenwarth, sent out a circular in which he ordered the officers of the Government to "energetically oppose the ideas of separation of Trentino from the Tyrol, which were so deeply rooted in the region." To Gaetano Manci, Podestà of Trent, Count Hohenwarth says "it has been decided to vigorously repress all demonstrations of Italianity from whatever source they may come"; and then the Podestà was deposed; and the Podestà of Rovereto and those of many other Communes were also deposed and officers faithful to the government were substituted. At last the Austrian count made the usual perquisitions for arms. Persecutions, proscriptions, public whippings and law suits ensued, followed by the confiscation of goods, etc. Many prominent citizens, such as the octogenarian Tito De Bassetti, Giovanni De Pretis and Antonio Marsili were arrested, maltreated and exiled at the whim of the Austrians.

But nothing could repress the smoldering sentiments of Italianity which animated the population of the eastern boundaries of Italy.

The National Committee of Istria, sending to Milan (in 1860) a sum of money gathered for the national cause, wrote:

> Istria, poor in everything except in generous feeling and tenderest love for the common Mother, Italy, can offer but a small sum; however, it comforts itself with the thought that Italy will understand that, better than the offering, was the courage with which this their subscription was gathered from the people despite threats of the Austrian police, and they will consider the

heart with which Istria brings this little gift to the altar of the Patria. Say to the brave Garibaldi, that Istria never has hesitated and never will hesitate to make sacrifices for the glorious national cause. But also say to him that on that day when he can plant the Italian flag on the shores of the Adriatic, Istria will rise in exultation and reinforce the army and navy of the Patria with its most courageous sons. Then the sister provinces will see that Istria — which Austria has so oppressed as to take her language from her and to attempt to wipe out her national sentiment, if this were possible — will not be unworthy of her. Now only in her secret soul and in the midst of torment can the adored names of Italy, Victor Emanuel II, and Garibaldi be spoken; but this secret voice — in the exaltation of hundreds of thousands of hearts — will change into a loud shout which will extend from our hills, and will reach to the sea as far as the opposite shore of the Adriatic Gulf.

And to Garibaldi, the Triestian women sent a flag made by themselves and wrote to him:

Austrian despotism, for its own advantage, has ameliorated the material conditions of Trieste by opening the city to immigrants and to commerce and lauds itself for the prerogatives given; but it has hidden a deadly poison for the "spontaneous dedition." Notwithstanding the most solemn pacts, it has for years and years used every art of violence to crush out her natural aspirations for civil and moral progress, and has tried to destroy her customs and language. It will not even respect its honor, and calls it *most faithful*, now. This is a lie, O General! because neither the abuses of the dominators nor aulic decrees nor the cowardice of the degenerate patricians have been able to denationalize our people who have remained Italian; and who today more than ever have the consciousness of their imprescriptible right to belong to the Italian family. And this flag, which we women of Trieste present to you, O General! let it be a token of the national sentiment which reanimates our husbands and sons. Accept this flag, O General! and accord to it the honor of being held by one of your intrepid legions, in the future battles for the common independence and common liberty, who shall cry, *Viva l'Italia! Viva Victor Emanuel II!*

The Triestino-Istrian committee made a sort of statement at the end of 1860, with a proclamation in which it said:

Many of our sons have shed their blood on the glorious fields of Calatafimi and Castelfidardo; many others groan in Austrian prisons or are in exile.

And Carlo Ferrari wrote, a short time after:

Trieste a envoyè des sommes considerables au comité Garibaldien. Une bonne partie de ses enfants etait avec les vainquers de Palerme et de Milazzo. Les dames Triestines out brodé des drapeaux, envoyè des addresses aux soldats de l'independence italienne.

Finally the Triestian journalist Pacifico Valussi, records one of many episodes which show the spirit of Italianity that animated the population of the eastern boundaries in 1860.

Once upon a time—thus wrote Valussi—a worthy Goritzian brought a sum of money to me which his compatriots wished to spend for the Italian Patria. It was the time when the Bourbon fleet was captured by Garibaldi, and he entrusted it to Admiral Persano, but the ship was abandoned by the sailors. When this occurred some Triestians, Istrians, and Friulians collected a fund to attract sailors of Istria, Veneto, and Dalmatia to equip the new Italian fleet; and they succeeded. Cavour accepted the gift, for he well understood the double advantage of taking sailors from Austria and making Italians of them. Now I say to the Gorzitian patriots that that sum, deposited so confidently in my hands, went to augment that equipment fund.

IX

The struggle for Italianity, sustained with indomitable pride by the Trentini, Triestians, Istrians, and Dalmatians against Austria from 1861 to 1865.

Cavour died June 6, 1861. The population within the boundaries of eastern Italy manifested their grief by closing the shops, by abstaining from theaters and holiday rejoicings and in a hundred different ways, notwithstanding the ferocity of the Austrian police who attempted to smother such demonstrations.

From 1861 to 1865 there was a suspension of arms in

Italy, but no suspension of fighting for the national cause. The Trentini would not resign themselves to being annexed to the Teuton Tyrol. When in 1861 there was an election for the Diet of Innsbruck, at Trent, only one citizen and twenty-seven employees of the government voted; at Rovereto only seven citizens and seventy employees; at Riva only two citizens and sixteen employees. In other places the employees did not trouble themselves to go to the polls. In the meantime the electors of Trent signed a declaration to refrain from the election, "in the certainty of thus expressing the general sentiments of the country." Similar declarations were signed by voters in several other places. Two of the elected deputies went to the Diet and proposed the separation of Trentino from Tyrol. The other deputies present said that "their general silence must be more eloquent than words and the solemn manifestation of the popular will must no longer be misunderstood."

It was in the elections of 1861 that the Italian liberal party of Trieste won with a majority in all the public offices (Municipal Council and Provincial Diet). And from that time to this they have always held them "as the result of their wise patriotic administration."

In the same year, 1861, the Diet of Istria, invited by the Austrian Government to elect its representatives to the parliament of Vienna, wrote on their ballots the single word *Nessuno* [no one] and placed them in the ballot-box.

After a year the Austrian Government again called the voters of Trentino for the elections. The electoral body this time went to vote en masse and succeeded in making the heads of the Italian autonomous party victorious. These newly elected leaders hastened to send a memorial to the Diet, in which they declared they would not attend the session; and they sent another memorial to the council of the empire requesting the separation of Trentino from the Tyrol.

On June 8, 1862, the Triestian and Istrian emigrants sent a gift to Garibaldi consisting of several geographic and eidographic maps of the Adriatic Sea and of its eastern shore, and wrote to him:

General! Istria and Trieste earnestly wish to be released from the Austrian yoke. God grant that this little gift which the sons of Istria and Trieste offer to you may be useful to you in helping to gratify their desires.

And Garibaldi on June 10, 1862, responded:

I know that Istria and Trieste long to break the chain with which they have been tied to the hated foreign sovereignty. I know that they are impatient to be restored to the mother country. I have faith to believe that the day is not far distant when complete national redemption will be effected.

On August 16, 1862, the populations of Trentino and Trieste and Istria sent a considerable sum of money to the central Venetian committee toward the erection of a monument to Cavour in Turin, writing:

We send to your excellencies this offering as a pledge of patriotic sentiment which animates the Italian people who still live in a land that, as yet, is foreign soil, but who have aspirations to become a part in the great Italian family, and who, after many centuries of misfortune, wish to be gathered in unity under the constitutional scepter of Victor Emanuel II.

On November 11, 1862, after a clamorous trial of the journal *Il Tempo* of Trieste, which showed how intelligent, intense and daring was the Italian propaganda that year among the Triestians, Professor Paolo Tedeschi and Antonio Antonaz, who had been the editors of the foregoing paper, were condemned to severe penalties.

In the first part of the year 1863 the gentle Veronese poet, Aleardo Aleardi, who, in 1848, had been entrusted by Manin as ambassador from the Republic of Venice to Paris, presented Victor Emanuel II with an album which the Istrian, Trentini and Venetian women had sent to Maria Pia, his daughter, who was about to marry Louis I, King of Portugal. In presenting the gift, the poet said, among others, these words:

They know (the women in Istria, Trentino and Veneto) that when God, in the battles of the past, diverted the bullets from your heroic breast, he did this to save you for this splendid mission of uniting Italy. And when our flag shall wave from the Italian hills of Trent and Pola, and shall be mirrored in the waters of our Adriatic, then O Sire! you will be able to say to your son with

supreme pride: *Humbert, I have wrought for thee the most beautiful crown of Europe.*

The King graciously received the gift and the good wishes.

About the first of the year 1863, the Austrian Government refused the demand to separate Trentino from the Tyrol and notified the Irredentist deputies that if at the end of a week they still refused to accept and to exercise the mandate which they had received from the voters, a new election would be necessary. The deputies did not even disturb themselves enough to reply to the imperial notification. And at the new election all were re-elected. Then all sent their resignations to the Diet, declaring themselves "pleased to have been able to offer again to their fellow countrymen the opportunity to express to the legislative powers of the State in a legal and constitutional manner what the tendency of public opinion was and what was the will of the country." The successive elections were always followed by the same results.

On February 17, 1863, at a masquerade in a theater of Goritz, sixteen young men and girls, all Goritzians, came dressed as Garibaldians. The Austrian police arrested them and condemned the leaders to hard labor. Among them were Nepomuceno Favetti and Clemente Riaviz, who had indulged in the amusement of saluting one another with these words: "One, two, three! Garibaldi our King!" And a second reason for their punishment was that Riaviz compelled one of the Austrians to kiss the picture of Garibaldi.

On May 14, 1863, the Austrian government dissolved the Common Council of Pisino, because it sent representatives to the centennial festival of Florence.

In 1864, inspired by Mazzini and with the encouragement of Garibaldi, a military action was instigated against Austria in Trentino. The leader of it was the Garibaldian Ergisto Bezzi, who gathered around him his co-religionists and fellow-soldiers of *The Thousand* (Fontana, Manci, Tranquillini, Zancani, and all the others) and organized a central committee at Trent and sub-committees in smaller places. But the Austrian Government learned of his plot and had

the leaders (about forty) arrested and dragged to Innsbruck where there was a special military tribunal; and there they were condemned for high treason, a part of them to nine years, others to seven, to five, to three, and to two years, of hard labor.

Mazzini, who had suffered so much because of the failure of the enterprise, wrote to Bezzi:

> Only a special line to say to you that I admire and love you more than ever. I know that you have done all that it was in the power of anyone to do. God knows how much I suffer for your present condition; but you are young and the future will give justice to you and to your faith. Ask anything of me in which you believe that I can be useful to you, freely, as brother to brother.

Even Garibaldi wrote to Bezzi, saying:

> You have done your duty nobly. Until all Italians will follow the example of men like you, they will deserve to remain under the lash, and will merit universal contempt. To your brave companions in prison I send a salutation from my soul.

In 1864 a conservative Italian senator imprudently declared in open Assembly that "Trieste was not within the aspirations of the Italian government." From Trieste a protest was quickly signed and sent by the most prominent citizens and by hundreds of patriots. The Austrian Government hoped that on the first occasion the municipal council of Trieste would declare this protest false. In January, 1865, the Council met: the Podestà, faithful to Austria, proposed to negate the importance of the protest, and carefully considered making unanimous an act of homage to the Emperor Francis Joseph. But the members of the council, enlightened and guided by the patriot De Rin, proudly rejected the proposal. Naturally the Council was dissolved. But the Triestians had the satisfaction of seeing published, in the *Official Gazette of the Kingdom of Italy*, a declaration of the Italian Government contradicting the assertion of the conservative senator and affirming that not only was Trieste Italian and for that reason within the aspiration of the mother country, but having rejected the proposal of

homage to Francis Joseph, it more than ever merited the recognition of Italy.

In the meantime there were many books published proving the Italianity and the aspirations of Trentino, Trieste, and Istria.

Niccolò Tommaséo through his untiring writings defended the Italianity of Dalmatia, affirming among other things that the Italian language had always been maintained in its purest form in Dalmatia, and it was used there in a "much better manner than that used by Cavour himself in speaking and writing."

X

The filial contribution of blood by the Trentini, the Triestians, the Istrians and Dalmatians, who battle for the independence and unity of Italy against the Austrians in the war of 1866. Trieste and Istria fight for their annexation to the Mother Country (1866).

The year 1866 passed like a whirlwind. As soon as it was known that Prussia and Italy were to be allied against Austria, the emigration committee of Trieste and Istria immediately pleaded the cause of the unredeemed regions, sending addresses to Victor Emanuel II and to the members of his government.

Alfonso Lamarmora, then President of the Ministry, replied:

The past rivalry between Trieste and Venice is an old story and can be placed side by side with that of Florence and Pisa; Venice and Genoa; and between hundreds of other Italian cities. The regions on the other side of the Isonzo river are Italian, exactly as are any other provinces within the borders of the great peninsula; that these regions feel themselves to be Italian and that they have decided that they wish to be Italians is proved by a series of courageous and clamorous manifestations which have followed one another for so long in their principal centers.

The repeated dissolutions of the municipal councils of Trieste, Goritz, Pisino and Capodistria; the dissolving of the provincial

Diets of Trieste and of Istria (Parenzo) because they did not wish to send any one to the Reichsrath of Vienna; the martial law of 1848–1859; the trials instituted and the political convictions at that time and after; the prohibitions even of geographic maps, the historic and diplomatic articles which treated calmly of those regions; finally the banishments, arrests, and suspensions of personal liberty which even now are perpetrated, are facts which cannot be destroyed with the usual phrase: *Oh, they are a few seditious busybodies of Piedmont!*

The Austrian Government responded to this by holding as hostages and incarcerating in its fortresses many of the most prominent citizens of Trieste and Istria; such as Martino Zucchi, Gioacchino Lovisoni, Hermet, Hortis, Madonizza, Rismondo and others.

But the patriots were not discouraged by these harassments. Instead, on June 18, 1866, these exiles sent to Victor Emanuel II, who was on his way to the battlefield, the greeting of their oppressed brothers:

We [the Triestians and Istrians] will be the guardians of the Julian Alps; of those Alps which many times have been infringed upon by foreigners and are the necessary boundary and security of national territory. We will give into your hands that Pola which was an Italian naval port from the time of ancient Rome. Austria has converted it into a menace to all of our Adriatic shore. We will give to you that Trieste which Austria would malignantly make the world believe is of German origin. It is the *vox populi* which calls you to those regions; it is a cry of sorrow and hope which bursts forth from the hearts of Italians who invoke you as their liberator and salute you as their king.

The young Triestians, Istrians, Dalmatians and Trentini hastened to place themselves under the flag of the Patria (in the regular army and with Garibaldi). And they fought with ardor against Austria.

At Custozza, June 24, 1866, for instance, Lieutenant Leonardo D'Andri of Capodistria fell while he was fighting at the head of his company, which had lost its captain. He had run to the aid of the grenadiers of Sardinia, who were sorely tried at Mônte Croce; he impetuously assaulted that hill, retook it from the Austrians, and at the same time recaptured

the prisoners and cannon which they had seized on taking the mountain. For this act D'Andri was given the gold medal for heroism.

In this same battle Claudio Zambelli, a Trentian, fell. And not less distinguished for their valor were the Triestians, Adolfo Sartori, R. Donaggio, Davide Milla, Giovanni Druffel, Eugenio Popovich, Gustavo Buchler and Enrico Ferolli; the Istrians Girolamo Gravisi, Giovanni Vascon, Michele Gallo, Carlo Depaugher, Domenico Grio, Domenico Vidacowich, Pietro Madonizza, the Goritzian Angelo Mazzini, the Trentian Professor Alberto Eccher and others of every state and social condition, all united with a single thought: Italy.

On July 3, 1866, Garibaldi made an assault upon the Austrians, who were superior in numbers, better armed, and in a more favorable position at Monte Suello, and defeated them. Among those, who contributed not a little by their valor to this victory were: Bezzi, Tranquillini, Ciotti, Fontana, Manci, Zancani, Leonardi, Zanolla and other Garibaldian Irredentists.[1]

The news of this brilliant feat of arms, coupled with the fact that General Medici had come with his men to within a few miles of Trent and that General Cadorna at the extreme right was marching upon Trieste, did much to relieve the minds of Italians, who were greatly disturbed by the disaster at Custozza.

On July 9th, the Irredentists sent an address to King Victor Emanuel II, repeating with fervor:

> Italian soil must be rid of foreigners and the whole circle of the Alps, our natural boundaries, must be in our power.

On July 16th, after a bitter fight against the Austrians in the Trentino, Garibaldi occupied Condino. This victory cost the Garibaldians much blood. Among those who fell in this battle were the Triestians, Giuseppe Fenali, Giuseppe Donati, Fillipo Faienz, Pietro Chiozza, Capria and Walfer.

Garibaldi, who in the last few days had freed a large part of the Trentino from the Austrians, issued (July 18th), the following proclamation to the people:

[1] Garibaldi was wounded in the thigh at the battle of Monte Suello.

Trentini: Your hopes and the hopes of all Italians are on the eve of fulfillment. The war song of our musketry brings to you the first echo of liberty; it brings to you a fraternal salutation. You understand both. We will fight together for the liberty and unity of Italy, and here on these your mountains, which are a formidable defense for free men, clasping each others' hands we will swear together to fight for the *Finis Austriae;* the end of foreign rule.

On July 20th, in a naval battle fought at Lissa between the Italians and Austrians, an officer of the marine, Giovanni Ivancich, a Dalmatian, fell with the name of Italy on his lips. And on July 21st, the Garibaldians fought at Bezzecca the greatest battle of the campaign, which lasted for more than twelve hours. This victory cost the Hero 1,522 volunteers, many of whom were from the Irredentist regions.

On July 25th, Garibaldi received from the government of the King of Italy the famous telegram: "Armistice signed. Evacuate Trentino." To which the Hero responded with the more famous: "I obey!"

Then (at the end of July, 1866), in the liberated towns (Storo, Darzo, Lodrone, Magaza, Dondone, Condino, Cimego, Dono, Bersone, Upper and Lower Tiarno, Drione, Strada, Bezzecca, Pieve of Ledro, Mezzolago, Molina and Barcesina, Legos, Pié of Ledro, Biacesa, Concei, Locca, Eugenise and Leusumo) the municipal councils and the clergy signed and sent to Victor Emanuel II the following address:

Now that the greatest sacrifices have been made; now that Austria is crumbling in every direction, here comes 'diplomacy' as an obstacle between us and our rights; and the voices of peace become so insistent that we fear them, whereas a few days ago we had so much hope in them. In this our distress we turn to you, who have never been deaf to the cry of sorrow of your people; and we say to you that we are yours, because we are part of the Italian nation, and we are ready to give our substance and our lives for her.

Numerous Trentian families in the war of 1866 gave each two brothers to the Italian army; as, for example, the Brescian family of Riva, the family De Pretis of Cagnò, the Ducati and the Molinari of Trent, the Eccheli of Ala,

the Tavernini family of Drò, the Weiss family of Strigno. The family of Count Sizzo de Noris of Trent gave three. And other families, like the Eccheli of Brentonico, the Jagher of Trent and Martini of Riva, gave as many as four each.

Among those who earned the silver medal for valor was the Triestian Enrico Ferolli, who was seriously wounded at Cimego. Honorable mention was given to the Triestian, Rodolfo Donaggio; medal and mention to the Trentini, Carlo Chimelli, Virgilio Inama, Giovanni Jagher, Alessandro Zinis, Carlo De Pretis, Ferdinando Rinaldi, Virgilio Covi and Filippo Tranquillini. The cross of officer of the military order of Savoy was offered to Ergisto Bezzi for his extraordinary service during the entire campaign, but he refused it as at other times he had refused the cross of cavalier.

In the Garibaldian legions the following greatly distinguished themselves: the Trentian, Oreste Bronzetti, brother of the two fallen heroes Narciso and Pilade; the Trentian lieutenant, Pietro Montanari, and Carlo Tivaroni.

Some volunteers were recent deserters from Austria, and consequently they put their lives at a double risk. Such were, for instance, the lieutenant Paolo Cortella of Storo, Cernio Battorchi of Tione, and Isidoro Canella of Riva.

About August 1, 1866, some Trentian patriots, led by the Garibaldian captains, Francesco Martini and Filippo Manci, attempted a revolutionary movement in Trentino which had for its object the annexation to Italy (as soon as peace should be declared), at least of the Trentino territory occupied by the soldiers of Garibaldi. The attempt failed.

On August 11th, the Triestians sent an appeal in which they said:

> In order that Italy may be a guarantee of the peace of Europe, she should be placed in the political family as a unit. Lacking that, and, consequently discontented and longing for affiliation, she would have within herself the reason for new dissensions and new conflicts.
>
> Now the Alps, which form the eternal and natural boundary of the Italian peninsula, rise back of Istria, just as they do behind Piedmont, Lombardy and Veneto, properly so called. The Isonzo River has its source in the Tricorno, one of the giant mountains of the Alps, and distributes its waters to the regions of Drava,

Sava, and Culpa, and also to those of the Adriatic Sea, through the regions which send their quota of waters to the plains of the Danube, and thence to the Black Sea and also to the declivities of the Italian continent. Nature, therefore, was not uncertain on the eastern limits of Italy in raising up such a notable barrier to separate countries that differ so radically in every respect; so much so that one can easily see even in the color and temperature of the air, and by the vegetation, how they are separated by unalterable laws.

The Isonzo River, the aulic boundary of Italy imposed by Vienna, would have remained almost unknown if a little back of its right bank, Austria had not created a separate administration for the imperial lieutenancy of Venice. Even when the counts of Goritz and the Archduke of Austria ruled over the Isonzo River opposite the republic of Venice, its whole course was not all of the boundary of the two dominions, but other minor waters and moats, and other evidences of private estates beyond on the lowlands and in the mountains of Friuli were the boundaries.

Those, however, who have learned to limit Venice on the east to the margin of a little stream, should (to show coherence in their historical reminiscences) cede to Austria that part on the right bank of the Isonzo already conceded to it by the hasty adjustments made at the time of the Napoleonic kingdom in Italy, in face of the fact that Istria was annexing itself to that kingdom.

Stop, therefore, such notions of the geography of Italy as have no foundation other than the insidious ambition of the Austrian chancellery. The geography of our Patria we learn from nature, and not as Austria would have us learn it, in order to preserve her illusions of a new conquest.

To recognize and to protect our own is our first duty; and civilized nations cannot do other than recognize that such duty is also our right.

The Istrians with the Triestians published another memorial directing it to Visconti Venosta, foreign minister of Italy. Here are the most salient points:

Istria is a point facing the Lagoon, and it is attached to the mainland by means of little islands and the swamps of Grado, Marano and Aquileia; Istria is a portion of land detached from our Alps and slipped down into our sea; it is to us almost a harbor. It is a necessary stopping place for us. The Roman and Venetian fleets wintered at Pola, which, following the changes of centuries,

was a branch of Aquileia, of Ravenna and of Venice. The Venetian galleys equipped themselves at the port of Quieto. Large and small ships which are on the way to Venice are obliged to stop at Quieto, at Umago and at Pirano. One cannot go to Venice without touching the coast of Istria. No boat, not a steamer, could venture into the upper Adriatic without danger from the cannons of Pola.

Istria, on her part, is Italian by origin, but is Venetian by spontaneous surrender. She fell with Venice in 1797 after the ill-advised peace of Campoformio; it is right and it is necessary that with Venice she shall rise again; otherwise not only Istria would suffer, but Venice with her.

Istria formed a part of the first Kingdom of Italy from 1805 to 1810, and when it fell again into the hands of Austria, the latter promised to annex it to the other provinces of Venice; but such promises — *Austrian promises* — were as usual not fulfilled. In 1848 and in 1859 Istria — at the demand of the people and by means of its municipal council — demanded and re-demanded to be united to Venice, but always in vain, because Austria remained mistress of the situation.

With the new order of things into which Europe must necessarily enter, it is in the interests of civilization that there shall be a satisfied and a strong Italy. But that Italy will never be, without the frontiers of the Rhaetian, Carnic and Julian Alps, and without the ports which nature offers on the coast of Istria in compensation for those ports which nature has denied her on the remaining Adriatic coast from Otranto to Grado.

The Italian nation has her eyes turned to the army and navy; she thinks that a rapid and daring action would give those lands into our possession, would facilitate the work of diplomacy, would offer to the Istrian population the longed for opportunity to disprove with facts the doubts which from some quarters are still circulating about them.

In repeating therefore the high confidence which we have in you, in the entire council of ministers, and in its illustrious head, we do not hide the hope of the Italian Government, which the memory of the great Cavour inspires, for the command of land and sea, and we must be in readiness, in concord, with vigorous decisions which are necessary for the interest and honor of Italy who waits, but feels a sense of life in her whole being. She wishes to be a whole and not simply to exist, but to occupy the position with her peers, which she expects finally to hold in Europe.

In fact, in Istria there is not a village that shows even a little

civic life which is not purely Italian. The national character is conspicuously Italian in all of its exterior manifestations.

Its manner of dressing, its customs, traditions, legends, songs, proverbs, are Italian. The architecture, from the humblest cottage to the city hall, is Italian. The brush and chisel, which decorate the temples and the public buildings, are Italian. Italian are the laws of the Communes, of which they have striking examples in the municipal statutes as far back as the year 1200, fashioned after those of the Romans, and such statutes regulated the civic life of the Istrian regions during the time that in many other parts of Italy there were only feudal lords and plebs ignorant of their past, their present or their future. Istria has illustrious names, which stand among the greatest of Italy. Who does not know the names of Vergerio and Flaccio, celebrated in the history of the Reformation; Sartorio, a leader in medical science; Muzio, competitor of Davanzati; Carli, the economist; Carpaccio and his paintings; the music of Tortini, not to mention the hundreds of others from Istria who reached the highest and most honored seats in the universities of Padua, Pisa, Bologna and Rome?

Under Rome, the province of Istria was always the most jealously guarded region of Italy, as the military monuments prove, of which we today admire the numerous remains and which Roman genius erected along the frontier against the nations on the opposite side of the Alps. And when those nations conquered the Roman Empire and irrupted on them and plundered and made Italy servile, it was the people of Istria and the people of the sea coast of Venice who, more than any other, saved the name of Italy, forming themselves into a government of free Communes (the first Italian Communes of the medieval age) under the nominal sovereignty of Byzantium.

Afterward, Istria continued to fight against foreigners (Longobardians, Slavs, Mongolians, Huns, Avars, Saracens); and we know that from that period the honor of the Venetian flag, or, as they said, the "Beatified Mark," was confided to the allied galleys and arms of the Istrians.

But all demands were in vain. In the treaty of peace signed at Prague, August 24, 1866, the just pretensions of Italy to the unredeemed regions and to that part of the Trentino acquired by Garibaldi were not recognized by conquering Prussia nor by the mediator, France. Thus the Government of Victor Emanuel II, by virtue of the treaty of peace

signed at Vienna, October 3, 1866, had to remain content with Venice only, ceded by Francis Joseph to Napoleon III, and by him given to Italy.

What sorrow this produced in the hearts of the people of the unredeemed regions can well be imagined especially if one consider that the Triestian, Pietro Brambilla, was informed by the Minister Visconti-Venosta, that Trieste was the objective point of the Italian military operations; and that Hortis and Carlo Combi, Triestians, were named vice commissioners of the Italian Government; one for Trieste and the other for Istria; and Carlo Boggio, a lawyer, who died in the naval battle of Lissa, had in his pocket the decree with which he was nominated royal commissioner of Trieste.

On November 14, 1866, Victor Emanuel II in traveling, stopped at Udine. In the procession of citizens there were more than 3,000 Goritzians, Triestians and Istrians. A Garibaldian of *The Thousand*, a native of Trieste, carried an Italian flag draped with crepe. On the following day they (the 3,000) presented the draped flag to the mayor of Udine with a considerable sum of money as a contribution from the Italians of the Irredentist region for a monument to Daniele Manin, Doge of the Republic of Venice during the memorable years 1848–49.

XI

The filial contributions of blood by the Triestians, Istrians, Trentini and Dalmatians to Italy in the taking of Rome (1867–1870).

The unredeemed regions of Italy were shocked by the way in which they were abandoned in 1866, but the patriots did not despair. They continued to work ardently for the complete unity of the Patria.

In May, 1867, the Italian Government consigned to the Austrians the convicts whom the latter had left in Veneto. They sent them to the station of Goritz, where from the hands of the Italian carabinieri they were given in-

to the hands of the Austrian gendarmes. The Goritzians received the Italian carabinieri with rejoicings, offering them food and champagne; cheering Italy, Garibaldi and Victor Emanuel II. During the night, the Austrian police made many arrests, and after a couple of days fourteen young Goritzians were condemned each to two weeks in prison and two days without food.

On the night of July 12, 1867, numerous rough Slovenes farmers, incited and protected by the Austrian police, went in procession to Trieste, hectoring the citizens with the cry, "Long live Austria!" These latter responded crying, "Long live Italy!" and repulsed the assailants. The provocation was renewed the next day, and the citizens attacked and disarmed the Slovenes. But the imperial Austrian troops intervened and fired on the Triestians, killing two and wounding twenty-three.

When Garibaldi was "arrested" in September, 1867, by the order of the government of Savoy, indignation blazed in the hearts of the Irredentists. At the mass meeting held in the Theatre Minerva in Udine, September 26, 1867, Pietro De Carina of Monfalcone, protesting in the name of the Italian provinces subject to Austria, reminded the meeting among other things of the words which the Hero a few months before had directed to the Irredentist immigrants in this same city of Udine: "Words of hope and of comfort," said the speaker, "which quickly passed to the not far distant boundaries, meeting a joyful echo from the fringe of the Julian Alps to the rock of Timavo, and to the shores of the gulf of Quarnero, and, it makes my heart tremble to say it, to the graves of Trentini which are even yet bloody; to the graves of the poor victims of 1866."

In the Garibaldian expedition of the Agro Romano all the unredeemed provinces of Italy were represented. The Trentian, Giuseppe Fontana, was the first to pass the boundary of the Roman State at the head of 150 volunteers. Of the seventy-five Italians, forming the handful who were led by the brothers Cairoli and aided by revolutionary patriots of Rome, twenty were Triestians. In the glorious combat of Villa Glori (October 23, 1867) four Triestians

fell dead, and others were wounded, among whom were Gian Luigi Vidali and Pietro Mosettig who fell near Giovanni Cairoli. And among those who penetrated into Rome was Giusto Muratti, also a Triestian.

In the wool shop of Giulio Ajani in Trastevere, at the side of the heroine Giuditta Arquati-Tavani, and the other generous patriots also massacred by the Pope's mercenaries the same day (October 23d), were Francesco Mauro and Enrico Ferolli, Triestians; and Rodolfo Donaggio, also a Triestian, was seriously wounded.

At Monterotondo (October 25, 1867) the Garibaldian captain Marziano Ciotti of Gradisca, kindled a fire at the door of the fortress, forcing its defenders to surrender and thus decided the famous victory which Garibaldi gained over the papal army. Afterward the Hero wrote to Ciotti:

> You at the head of your company were the first to enter Monterotondo on the burning ruins at the Porta San Rocco. I proclaim you a hero, and brave was the company which you commanded. The Italian women will honor the champions of our glories. And I send to you a fraternal kiss.

Afterward at Mentana, in that glorious defeat, Marziano Ciotti of Gradisca fought heroically; Luigi Pecenco of Trieste and a sixteen year old volunteer, Giuseppe Pollini of Rovereto, fell dead on the field; and the Trentian, Ergisto Bezzi remained seriously wounded and a prisoner. And among the last to leave the field of battle were captain Emilio Maddali, Triestian; Carlo Tivaroni, Dalmatian; Federico Cuder, Istrian; and Vincenzo Cattarozzi, Trentian.

At Florence the two Dalmatian brothers, Tommaso and Rovis Vusio, worked for the rescue of Rome.

At Padua, the Istrian University students, with Domenico Lavisato as their leader, conspired for the same purpose. Garibaldi, responding from Caprera to an address which they sent him, encouraged them with these words:

> Thank you for your kind attestation of love. You are Italian by origin and aspirations, and therefore Italy must not forget you, as Istria is one of the most beautiful gems in her crown. I would willingly give my life for the complete rescue of our family.

On April 20, 1868, the marriage of Prince Humbert of Savoy to his cousin, the Princess Margherita, was celebrated. The Irredentist immigrants presented an address to Victor Emanuel II, extending from Udine the good wishes of the Trentian and Julian regions, reminding him and the newly wedded pair that "only by the rescue of these regions would the star of Italy shine without a blemish."

In the same year, 1868, the Istrians, Triestians, Friulians and Dalmatians had the satisfaction of seeing the Italian parliament approve the law by which "all Italians of the provinces, which do not yet form a part of the Kingdom of Italy, are equal in the exercise of civil rights as citizens of the nation, on condition — after presenting their birth papers and conforming to the other formalities of the law — that they register their names in the books of an Italian town of their choice."

The members of the national committee of Goritz wrote to Benedetto Cairoli,[1] who had presented and supported this law from 1862, reminding him that "as in the past the faith of the Goritzians in Italy was unshaken, it would continue unshaken in the future, and it was necessary that their free brothers should sometimes encourage them with words of comfort." The committee, thanking Cairoli for his having said these words of comfort, begged of him always to remember them and they prayed for the day of their deliverance.

Cairoli responded:

> Your misfortune is a common evil and it would also be a shame if it could be forgotten; but it is not. I shall remember your sufferings, your daring protests and the aid which you have given in the battles, in the sorrows, and your share in the glories, of the Italian Patria. Your cause therefore is ours, and I hope to be able to consecrate to it not only my word but my life. Receive from me, brave citizens and worthy interpreters of the national thought, a fraternal salute.

In July 1868, after several demonstrations by the munici-

[1] Son of Dr. Carlos Cairoli and Adelaide Bono, the modern mother of the Gracchi; one of the finest heroes of the Italian Risorgimento, a deputy to the National Parliament for thirty years, and Minister of Foreign Affairs under Humbert I(1825–1889).

pal council and by the people of Trieste, a crowd of Slavic farmers, incited and abetted by a territorial battalion composed of the fiercest Slavs, called *bácoli* (cockroaches) by the people, brutally assaulted the Triestians with the cry "Long live Austria!" The Triestians repulsed them, crying, *Viva l'Italia!* The fight continued until the following day. A Triestian student, Rodolfo Parisi, and two Triestian workmen, Francesco Sussa and Niccolò Zecchia, fell dead in the street (the first received 22 blows of bayonets); in the main street of the city there were dozens of wounded. At the funeral of the victims there was an immense crowd, from whom were gathered more than 11,000 signatures with which the city demanded from the government the dissolving of the territorial battalion. But instead of justice, the Triestians received more terrible persecutions from the police. Many citizens were arrested. The condemnations were serious. The spirit of the Triestians was embittered. They felt the yoke of Austria grow heavier than ever.

In August 1868, at Goritz, a small bomb was exploded in the cathedral during the mass which was celebrated for the birthday of Francis Joseph. Carlo Blasig was suspected by the Austrian police and was condemned to six years' imprisonment. In the prison of Gradisca where he was incarcerated, he met Melchiorre De Pregel, a fellow-citizen and brother of the same faith, who had been condemned for four years; between them they concocted a plan of escape which they put into execution, fleeing and taking refuge in Udine.

Thus, between conspiracies, demonstrations, persecutions, trials, condemnations, martyrdom of every sort, the Italian Irredentists arrived at the second half of the year 1870.

On September 20th of that year, the Italian soldiers, commanded by General Raffaele Cadorna, entered Rome. On that memorable occasion, the officer, Cristoforo Venier of Capodistria, distinguished himself and was wounded, together with other Irredentists.

At Trieste the news of the taking of Rome was received with great joy. The people ran hurrying through the streets

cheering for Italy. The Austrian police charged with fixed bayonets and dispersed the crowds, but they always reassembled and defended themselves. In the evening all the windows of the houses were brilliantly illuminated. The Austrian police ran from house to house blowing out the lights, but they were quickly relighted. This infuriated the police against the people.

It has been truly said that on that day (September 20, 1870) there was more blood spilled at Trieste than at Rome.

XII

Triestians are found among the Garibaldian volunteers in defense of France against Prussia in the war of 1870. Continued demonstrations of Italianity in the Irredentist regions (1872–1882). The young Triestian, William Oberdan, university student at Rome, ardent apostle of Italianity, is hanged at Trieste for attempting to take the life of Francis Joseph. Tremendous Italian demonstrations against Austria (December 1882).

In the autumn of 1870, Garibaldi, forgetting his treatment in 1848 and in 1866, placed himself at the head of an Italian corps of volunteers among whom were his sons, Menotti and Ricciotti, and his son-in-law, Stefano Canzio, and went to France to defend the Republic against Prussia. The Hero defeated the Prussians, charging with bayonets at Pasques, Prenois and Commarin; he defeated them again at Dijon after three days of terrible fighting (January 21, 22, 23, 1871) and there captured the flag of the 61st regiment of infantry. This was the only flag which the Prussians lost in the memorable war with France.

Caprin, Dudovich and several other Triestians, for whom Garibaldi impersonated the ideal of liberty for all oppressed people, took part with him in the aforesaid battle.

The death of Mazzini took place at Pisa, March 10, 1872, and produced immense sorrow in the unredeemed lands. At Trieste black-bordered manifestos were circulated expressing

the citizens' grief. The Austrian police sequestered that number of the journal *L'Operaio* (organ of the local society of workmen of which Edgardo Rascovich was president), because it had been made the interpreter of the Triestian sentiments of sorrow.

In 1873 Victor Emanuel II, going to Vienna, passed through Nabresina. The Austrian police stopped hundreds of carriages which carried Triestians who wished to salute "their King," and arrested great numbers. In the same year Alessandro Manzoni [1] died in Italy. At Trieste manifestations of grief were shown by the citizens, followed by persecutions by the Austrian police.

In July 1877, the Istria-Triestian committee published a proclamation in which they assured the Italian Irredentists that the staunchest patriots of Italy—Garibaldi, Cairoli, Avezzana, Fabrizi and others—had always been determined to recover the regions subject to the Hapsburgs.

When the news came to Trieste that Victor Emanuel II had died January 9, 1878, the Triestians, as an evidence of their sorrow, immediately closed their shops and theaters. The Austrian police attempted, but in vain, to re-open them; they tore down the Italian flags which were draped with black; sequestered the newspapers; arrested and condemned citizens en masse. Notwithstanding all this, on January 14, 1878, at the funeral in the Pantheon, at Rome, there appeared a superb wreath of flowers, which the city of Trieste had sent "To their King" by the hands of a special committee. And on January 15, 1878, at the funeral mass under the auspices of the Italian consulate in Trieste, new and popular manifestations of Italianity were followed by other arrests and other condemnations. Among other marks of loyalty, the Common Council at the suggestion of the Councillor Antonio Vidacovich, suspended the session as a mark of their sorrow.

At Goritz, on June 2, 1878, an Italian flag waved from the hill of Montuzza and on the same day, from the highest

[1] This distinguished Milanese novelist and poet was the author of *I Promessi Sposi*, which has been translated into every modern tongue. One day, on receiving Garibaldi into his own home, he exclaimed: "This is the happiest day of my life!" (1785–1873.)

point of the hill, another great Italian flag was raised with an invocation for unity.

In the same year Giosuè Carducci visited Trieste and was received with rejoicings. From that visit the poet derived the inspiration for his odes *Saluto Italico* and *Miramar*. The first edition of *Saluto Italico* was made into loose leaves by the society *Young Trieste* and the edition was quickly exhausted. In the last verse in this volume the poet referred to the Italian Irredentists, saying to them:

In the face of strangers, who are encamped on your soil, cry: Italia, Italia, Italia!

For circulating this many were arrested and convicted.

On October 15, 1878, Garibaldi wrote from Caprera to the Triestian society called *Young Trieste:*

If today I feel myself to be an old man, it is because I feel myself to be useless to the sacred cause of Trieste and Trent. I should be proud, however, to give to you the last days of my life.

On October 19, 1878, at a secret meeting at Forlì presided over by Aurelio Saffi, at which Edgardo Rascovich of Trieste was present, it was decided to open a recruiting station in Italy for the purpose of forming a liberating expedition into the Irredentist region, its first object being immediately to collect arms.

In this same year a number of Triestian students were arrested, among whom was one Salvatore Barzilai.[1]

In Goritz, in 1878, a national journal called *Il Goriziano* was started. Notwithstanding continual persecutions it imperturbably continued its battle for Italianity. But the Austrian authorities arrested the editors, brought them to trial and condemned them to prison. The principal persons accused were Antonio Tabai, an architect, and Giuseppe Vinci; both were condemned to prison; but on December 15th, they audaciously escaped to Udine in Italy.

Also the Goritzians, Giuseppe Ricchetti, Carlo Jamsy,

[1] The Triestian Barzilai has been deputy to the Italian National Parliament from a district of Rome representing the Italian Irredentists during the last twenty-five years. For a long time he had been president of the Associated Press in Italy and was Minister in the Salandra Cabinet.

Giuseppe de Mulitsch, Luigi Gregorich, Stefano Riaviz, Emilio Pogatschnig and Vincenzo Luccardi were condemned to several years of imprisonment.

In February 1879, at Goritz some bombs were exploded. The Austrian police searched the houses of the best families of the city and arrested Ugo Zanardi, Menotti Delfino, Attilio and Emilio Mortera, Gustavo Fabricci, Sigismondo Stella and Alessandro Regazzini, and they were condemned, some to two and some to three years in the dungeons of Capodistria and Gradisca.

When on June 3, 1882, it was known that Giuseppe Garibaldi had died at Caprera the evening before, at Trieste, at Trent and in all of the unredeemed regions there occurred demonstrations similar to those that had followed the death of Victor Emanuel II: great manifestations of sorrow on the part of the citizens, ferocious persecutions on the part of the Austrian police.

Thus the year 1882 was one of the most restless and important for the Italian Irredentists. The death of Garibaldi resuscitated in the hearts of the oldest, all of the charm and the poetry of the Garibaldian epopee, and aroused glorious memories in the young. More than this, the insistent voice of an imminent alliance between the Italian and Austrian Governments was heard. The souls of the Italian people rebelled at the idea of a union with an ancient tyranny, which as yet bound Italian soil with an iron chain. Such a union meant formal and decisive renunciation of the unredeemed lands. The patriots could not resign themselves to accepting the cold and calculating reasons of state, judging them to be illogical, unnatural and monstrous.

Austria, however, indifferent to Italian sentiment, wished to celebrate in the year 1882, the fifth centenary of the so-called "dedition" of Trieste as a challenge to the suppressed Irredentist agitation. The Austrian Government promoted and organized an Industrial Exposition at Trieste, and ordered the Triestians to take their part in it. The citizens responded by showing themselves hostile to the proposed festivities. Then the representative of the Aus-

trian Government enlisted outsiders, debauched them, and with them tried to improvise in Trieste demonstrations favorable to the Empire. The paid press swelled the importance of such demonstrations, making Europe understand that Trieste was loyal to the Hapsburgs.

But the resolute attitude of the citizens frustrated the attempts of the court followers. For instance: a local Austrian society attempted to raise a flag given to it by the Austrian Princess, Stefania; but at the moment of the raising it could not be found, having been "mislaid" by Italian patriots. The Slav sculptor Rendic one morning entered his studio prepared to take to the public square one of his statues representing the "dedition" of Trieste, but he found it headless. The Austrian police rose in fury.

On the occasion of the visit of the Austrian Archduke Charles Ludwig and on the evening before the opening of the exposition, the government ordered military bands to play through the streets, and they were followed by crowds of the lowest Croatian element, led by a dozen or more high functionaries of the Austrian Government. These shouted "Down with Italy and death to Italians! Prison, gallows and bullets for the liberals!" The results of the provocation were serious. Two bombs were exploded. Three high Austrian functionaries and about twenty lesser ones and some spies were struck. Some of them lost their lives and others were seriously wounded, thus expiating the insult to the sentiments of Italianity and of liberty held by an entire population.

The police did not succeed in discovering the authors of this attempt; but they took revenge by incarcerating numerous suspected citizens. They also arrested the young printers Luigi Schirone, Ricciotti Gervasio and Arturo Kattenbrunner for having clandestinely printed the approval of the attempt, and they were condemned for defending the crime. For the same reason they convicted two peasant women, Giulietta Krammer and Carolina Olacutti, one to one and one-half years and the other to two years of hard labor.

On August 18, 1882, the police sequestered a trunk con-

taining a bomb of the Orsini type, and a smaller bomb belonging to Filippo Spongia of Rovigno of Istria, a sailor of the Lloyd Company. These had been sent by the Triestians exiled in Milan, who were affiliated with the Garibaldian Circle of Trieste and presided over by Raimondo Battera. Numerous arrests and condemnations followed.

At the opening of the exposition only the employees of the government attended, and they were protected by the Austrian soldiers. The citizens absolutely refused to go. At the ticket office only one paid ticket was found; while the next morning the garden of the exposition was covered with the tri-colored badges and proclamations of the Italians.

At Vienna the haughty conduct of the Triestians irritated the government circles. It was immediately officially announced that in the following September, 1882, Emperor Francis Joseph would visit Trieste to assure the success of the exposition by his august presence and to put a bridle on the rebellious conduct of the Triestians.

Meanwhile at Rome there was a Triestian student named Guglielmo Oberdan, twenty-four years of age, in the engineering department of the university. He was a young man of fine culture and of austere moral qualities, a fervent apostle of Irredentism, greatly esteemed and loved by the professors as well as by his fellow students and other Italian patriots. He was poor and fatherless. His mother was a native of Goritz. He was a private tutor to his companions and worked as designer with an engineer in Rome, by means of which he was able to earn twenty dollars a month, and on this sum he lived "like a lord" and also sent a small sum to his mother, whom he adored.

In 1882 Oberdan was approaching his graduation. But the Irredentist fermentation, the rumors of an imminent Italo-Austrian alliance and recent events in his Trieste fired his soul. More than once he said that "the cause of Trieste needed the blood of a Triestian martyr," and when he believed that the time was ripe he dedicated himself to the sacrifice. And, considering that the plans of the armed expeditions from Italy to the Irredentist regions (plans which were renewed every year) always failed, he himself

decided to promote an insurrectional movement at Trieste in the hope of having the aid of Italy.

Before leaving to carry out his plan, Oberdan went to the office of *Il Dovere*, a republican journal of Rome directed by Felice Albani, where he wrote and signed his political testament:

To my Italian Brothers:

I go to perform a solemn and important act.

Solemn, because I prepare myself for a sacrifice; important, because it will bring forth fruit.

It is necessary that similar acts shall shake from their shameful torpor the souls of youths who are free and those who are not free.

Too long these generous sentiments have been silenced; too long has the head been bowed to every sort of insult from strangers. Sons forget their fathers. The name Italian threatens to become synonymous with cowardice or indifference.

No! Our generous instincts cannot thus die. They only lie dormant, they will awaken.

At the first cry of alarm the youth of Italy will rise; they will run with the names of our Great Ones on their lips and expel forever from Trieste and Trent the hated stranger, who for so long has menaced and oppressed us.

Oh, I would that this my act might lead Italy into war against the enemy! To war! the only salvation, the only barrier that can arrest the increasing moral dissolution of our youth.

To war, youth, while we yet have time to blot out the shame of the present generation; and let us fight like lions!

Out with the strangers! And as winners, strong with great love for the *true* Patria, we will prepare ourselves to fight other battles and conquer for the *true* idea, for *the* idea which has always pushed the strong to bloody battle, for the *Republican* idea.

First be independent, then be free, Brothers of Italy! Avenge Trieste and then avenge me!

September 1882. GUGLIELMO OBERDAN.

The young man left Rome, after having received from the Triestians the promise of an insurrection, of a sort of "Triestian Vespers," for which it was said the means were ready. He received encouragement and promises of aid from various prominent democrats of Italy.

He arrived at Udine, September 15 1882. From Udine he directed his steps to the Italo-Austrian boundary and succeeded in passing it under a stormy sky (the preceding night there had been a deluge). Facing a cold wind and through byways steep and muddy, he reached the little hamlet of Ronchi in Eastern Friuli and stopping at the inn of a certain Giovanni Berini, asked for a room. He was weary; he threw himself on the bed; he slept; but suddenly he was wakened by a loud knock on the door. Shoeless and in his night shirt he hastened to open it and saw before him the Austrian gendarmes.

"Who are you?" demanded the leader.

"Giovanni Rossi from Goritz," responded Oberdan, who understood that he had been betrayed; and he quickly snatched his revolver, crying in his dialect, "It must be you or me!" and fired.

The leader of the gendarmes, who had quickly snatched the revolver of Oberdan, hoping to divert the shot, had the finger of one hand crushed. The youth was overpowered by the Austrian patrol, disarmed and tightly tied. In his valise were found two bombs and a flask of powder. The gendarmes dragged him in chains to Monfalcone. Then, to the imperial Austrian commissioners, Oberdan declared himself to be Giovanni Rossi, son of the dead Francesco (Rossi) and Giuseppina Ciani, who was living; twenty-four years of age; of Trieste; student of physical and mathematical sciences. He also declared that he had fired at the captain of the gendarmes, because the Austrian uniform to him, an Italian, was most abhorrent as representing a power "which remained by force in our home." As to his intentions, he confessed that he was headed toward Trieste to take part in the celebration which they were holding "and to give in some way a greeting to his Imperial Majesty." He acknowledged as his the bombs, the revolver, the powder flask, certain explosive capsules and all of the other things found in his valise. In consequence of such declarations, Oberdan was dragged to Trieste, surrounded by an escort of armed Austrians, and was incarcerated in the fortress of San Giusto to await his trial.

Francis Joseph arrived to visit the exposition of Trieste. The city appeared Austrian only because of the imperial flags on the ships anchored in the port, by emblems on the government offices and by the presence of soldiers and the guards with their spiked helmets. But the citizens were not to be seen anywhere.

Whoever in those days made himself familiar with the life of a Triestian citizen, would have known that his heart was Italian, Whoever had heard the intimate voice of those hearts would have heard repeated without end one name: Italia!

On the birthday of the emperor, the exposition of Trieste reached the maximum of its visitors — two hundred. Meanwhile three months had passed since the arrest of Oberdan. Finally, he was recognized[1] as a deserter and then as the culprit who had attempted to take the life of Francis Joseph and the compages of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and by court martial he was condemned to death by means of the halter.

While listening to the reading of the sentence, Oberdan smiled, and fixing his calm blue eyes on the judges, simply said, "Thank you." The desperate mother implored grace from the Emperor. But she was denied it. She was only granted permission "in an exceptional manner" to visit her son on the condition that she would induce him to ask directly for imperial grace. This the poor creature tried to do, but the young man proudly rejected the card presented for his signature. And to the sobbing mother he said with voice sweet but firm, "Mother, be quiet, I shall know how to be worthy of you." From that moment the unhappy woman was not again permitted to see the child of her bosom.

An infinite number of telegrams, invoking grace for the young Triestian condemned to death, arrived for Francis Joseph from every part of Europe. Among others who

[1] The city of Trieste had accorded to Oberdan, when he was younger, a "Borsa di studio" of 300 lire a year ($60.00) because at Vienna he had graduated in engineering. Thus he arrived at the age of military service and as a university student he was incorporated in the 22d Austrian Weber regiment, which in that year, 1878, repressed the revolts of the proud mountaineers of Bosnia, who defended their rights of independence against Austria. Guglielmo Oberdan, ardent soul of liberty, thirsty for justice, deserted the Austrian army and went first to Ancona and thence to Rome.

telegraphed was the great jurist and Italian criminologist, Francesco Carrara and the poet, Giosuè Carducci. Victor Hugo telegraphed from Paris, saying:

Sire, here is an opportunity for grace. All the world awaits it. Clemency is the virtue of kings. The penalty of death is abolished among civilized people. The penalty of death will be canceled from the codes in the twentieth century. It would be well to put in practice from this hour a law of the future.[1]

The Triestian women, at the head of whom was Clementina Bazzoni, wife of Dr. Bazzoni, Podestà of Trieste, among other things said to Francis Joseph: "Sire, save a young life. Spare the city of Trieste from the horror of capital punishment."

But the Emperor of the Hapsburgs responded to no one.

The cell in which Oberdan was confined was six feet wide and nine feet long, with an iron door. The large cell next to him was occupied by a small troop of rough Austrian soldiers, who sneered at and insulted the condemned man. Oberdan responded to them by singing patriotic hymns.

December 19, 1882, the eve of the execution, was a day of indescribable anguish for the Triestian patriots. The women crowded around the office of the Austrian police, hoping to see the longed-for telegram conceding grace to the condemned youth. But nothing reached them. There came instead by special train, at eight o'clock in the evening, directly from Vienna, a Mr. Müllenbacher, the hangman of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. He was dressed in black with a tall silk hat and gloves also of black. He was accompanied by two assistants. Few knew of his arrival. From the station he went in a closed carriage to the great barracks to eat and sleep. In the morning (December 20, 1882) at six o'clock they forced Guglielmo Oberdan to dress himself in the uniform of the Austrian Weber regiment which he had deserted; he was visited by the military physician, Mandich, and then by the chaplain. But the young man refused the so-called consolation of religion.

[1] In Italy the death penalty was abolished following the work *Crimes and Penalties* by the illustrious Italian criminologist Cesare Beccaria (1738–1794), a work that Voltaire called "the natural human code." Catherine II, Empress of Russia, inserted it in full in her code.

Toward seven o'clock he was ordered to leave his cell. The north wind whistled. It was bitterly cold. In the damp court yard darkness reigned, and it was only lugubriously lighted by the smoky red rays from the lanterns of the jailers. In the obscurity glistened the points of the bayonets held by the soldiers who filled the court yard, and the arms of the gallows were outlined ominously in the near distance.

Oberdan fixed his gaze fearlessly on it and went to meet it with firm step. At the foot of the gallows he tore off the military cape, threw it on the ground and stamped it under foot with supreme hate. Then he ascended the fatal stairs. Reaching the platform he cried: "I die content, because I hope my death may be of service in reuniting my beloved Trieste to the mother country." The military commander silenced him, ordered the roll of the drums to drown his voice and directed the hangman to hurry his work. Oberdan snatched the rope, himself placed it around his neck, crying: "Viva Trieste-Italiana; viva l'Italia!" The murderous rope stopped the voice and the life of the youth. The tragedy was accomplished. A new name, and among the most glorious, was added to those of the martyrs of the Italian Risorgimento.

The Austrian journals of the empire published the news of the execution with the most minute details. Indeed they said that this same hangman, Müllenbacher, declared that among the many whom he had executed not one had shown the resolution and courage of this young Triestian.

The announcement of the execution of Oberdan produced immense consternation in Trieste. Energetic protests were made. The theaters remained deserted for three consecutive nights, notwithstanding that the Austrian police insisted the artists should perform just the same, under penalty of exile. The journals were sequestered and journalists who had commented bitterly on the tragic event were arrested, tried and condemned. Enrico Jurettig, for example, publisher of the *Independent* of Trieste and former publisher of the *Isonzo* of Goritz, for having exalted the martyrdom

of Oberdan, was condemned to eighteen months' imprisonment and died during his incarceration.

Giuseppina Oberdan, with heart-breaking maternal sorrow and with infinite tears, constantly sang the praises of her son, thus:

My Guglielmo had the heart of an angel; he was gentle-mannered, studious, high minded and a loving soul. How many times he caressed me, saying: *Poor mother; you have done so much for me! But do not doubt, when I become professor of mathematics, I will compensate you for all your sufferings. We will always live together and be happy.*

His professors idolized him; he was always at the head of his class. At fifteen years of age he earned money by tutoring. He had no vices, he had no extravagances; he was happy if he could buy some books with a few cents which he had carefully saved.

In Italy, at the announcement of the execution of Oberdan, one heard a roar as of a wounded lion.

Carducci said:

Guglielmo Oberdan was hanged this morning at Trieste. It is *Austriacally natural.* Thus the Emperor Francis Joseph hurried to respond to the French poet [Victor Hugo] and to the Italian professor,[1] who invoked his clemency. It is Austriacally more than natural. He [Francis Joseph] was reared in blood; in blood he is growing old; we hope that blood will suffocate him, and be it his own blood.

Italy, however, is weak within, most weak at the frontier. Now we have need of social reforms for justice; economic reforms for strength; arms, arms, arms, for security. And arms not for defense but offense. Italy, by defending herself, must take the offensive. Otherwise she will be invaded. Young men of Italy, think of these things. And stop theorizing and debating with wearisome words. We must honor the memory of Guglielmo Oberdan who was sacrificed because of our delinquency and for us.

In ten years, on the highest point of our Alps a monument to Caius Marius[2] and to Giuseppe Garibaldi will be raised, with the motto: *Foreigners, turn back!*

And elsewhere Carducci said:

[1] Carducci himself, professor of belles lettres at Bologna.

[2] Caius Marius was one of the most celebrated Roman generals, seven times consul. Defeated Jugurtha, king of Numidia and the Teutons, (156–86 B. C.)

Guglielmo Oberdan went not to kill, I believe, but to be killed. He throws his life to us and says: *Here is the pawn; Trieste belongs to Italy.* We respond: *Guglielmo Oberdan, we accept, for life and for death. We have retaken Rome from the Pope; we will retake Trieste from the Emperor.*

And Giovanni Bovio, philosopher and moralist, said:

Oberdan, closing the Italian martyrology, reopened Italian tradition. The rope which strangled him, woven with our flag, shows that the new rights of the people will extend over Austria.

And Aurelio Saffi, the most prominent follower of Mazzini, said:

The waves of time pass with changing vicissitudes of selfishness and error, and carry with them the names of the oppressors of people condemned to scorn and oblivion; but the memory of Guglielmo Oberdan will live perennially in the hearts of Italians, because his martyrdom stands for the immortal protest of nature against tyranny which breaks its laws.

And Matteo Renato Imbriani, the high-principled defender of the rights of the humble, said:

His martyrdom is a new symbol of the rescue of our Patria. Although chronologically the last of the martyrs of Italy, he stands among the first — if the intellect of the Patria does not fail — for high conscience and determined will.

And Ettore Socci, apostle of woman suffrage in Italy, said:

The life of Guglielmo Oberdan is epitomized in love for his mother, in love for study, in love for the Patria. Young men, fill your hearts with such love; study, gird up your loins to face death for the Patria.

The students and the working men of Italy suddenly raised protests in every city. To the young martyr everywhere memorials were voted of which one epigraph — that of Carducci — appearing in the Athenaeum in the city of Bologna, was one of the most incisive and beautiful:

To Guglielmo Oberdan—who died heroically for Italy—a terror admonition and a reproof to outside tyrants, and to the cowards within.

But the government of Humbert I, instead of uniting its voice with that of the nation, and at least saving in part its Italian dignity, did everything possible to smother the cry of indignation which arose from the peninsula from one end to the other. And very soon after (1883) this same government of Savoy announced that it had signed (May 20, 1882) the treaty of alliance with Austria: the treaty of the *Triple Alliance!*

XIII

The monument to Dante in the city of Trent (1896). Manifestations of Italianity at Trieste and Istria (1897–1903). The elementary and intermediate Italian schools in Goritz and Gradisca, Trieste, Istria and in Dalmatia. The eternal lamp placed by the Irredentist Italians at the tomb of Dante in Ravenna (1908). The Italian Irredentist students of the University of Vienna assaulted by the Austrian students of the same University and fired upon by the police. Tremendous Italian demonstrations of protest against Austria (1908). The incessant conspiracies of Italian Trieste against the Austrian Government until 1915.

On October 11, 1896, a monument to Dante was unveiled in Trent following a public subscription for this purpose by the Italians of the Irredentist regions. The monument, the work of the sculptor Zocchi, was over 17.7 meters high (the figure itself was 5 meters high) with a base 13 meters wide. Around the pedestal the three cantos of the *Divina Commedia* were represented; the *Inferno* by the statue of Minos, the *Purgatorio* by the events of Sordello, and the *Paradiso* by Beatrice among the Angels. The inscription reads thus: "To Dante, the Father.—Trentino—with the eulogy and aid of the Nation—MDCCCLXXXIX [the year in which the monument was planned] MDCCCXCVI [the year of the unveiling]."

The festivities celebrating occasions of this kind among the Trentini and other Italians who had gathered together from the Irredentist regions were most impressive.

Trieste refused to send deputies to the Austrian parliament for twenty-five years. Finally, in 1897, the evergrowing and serious national condition induced the city to stop this abstention and to take part in the elections. This resulted in a triumph and the election of the Italian liberal candidates.

In accepting the trust conferred upon them they immediately made a declaration in which they affirmed that their acceptance "must leave untouched the historical judiciary of Trieste in relation to the Austrian Empire." In the Parliament of Vienna "there were frequent protests made against Trieste belonging to the monarchical Government of Austria, and the expression of hopes of its annexation to the Kingdom of Italy, against which the Austrian ministry, the German and Slavic deputies and even the representatives of Austrian socialism rose and protested."

In the same year, 1897, many young Triestians and many from the unredeemed regions hastened to enroll themselves with Ricciotti Garibaldi, second son of the Hero, who had joined Greece in the war against Turkey.

In 1899 Menotti Garibaldi, the eldest son of the Hero, visited Trieste. He was triumphantly received by the people. The usual persecution followed on the part of the Austrian police.

When, in 1900, the news of the death of Humbert I reached Trieste, the city went into mourning; the Triestian deputies with those of Julian-Venice sent a telegram of condolence to Rome. The Austrian police confiscated the telegram of the deputies and suppressed the newspapers; arrested citizens, and even condemned some young girls, who in sign of mourning had worn black ribbons on their sleeves and necks.

In 1901 Gabriele d'Annunzio went to Trieste. He was received with festivities. The usual persecutions followed on the part of the police.

In the same year Giuseppe Verdi died in Italy. There were manifestations of grief in Trieste. The usual persecutions followed on the part of the police.

In the same year Victor Emanuel III visited the Ex-

position at Udine, accompanied by Queen Helena. Thousands of Triestians, Istrians, Goritzians, Trentini gathered to welcome "their King." On their return nearly two hundred citizens were arrested and prosecuted. Ernesto Spadoni, member of the council of Trieste, sacrificing his republican sentiments for love of Italy, asked to be presented to the King. There was also at this time a convention of students in which hundreds of young men of the Irredentist regions participated. At this same convention they discussed the coming campaigns and enlistings, and the Triestian Luciano Magrini published a thrilling appeal in which the phrase *Trieste or Death* predominated.

In the same year (1901) on the announcement of the birth of the Princess Iolanda, the firstborn of the King of Italy, fifty homing pigeons were sent from Trieste. They flew toward Rome to carry the good wishes of the Triestians to the reigning family of Italy.

In February 1902, a general strike was called as a protest against the Austrian government which had placed Austrian soldiers at the disposal of the *Austro-Hungarian Steamship Company* as substitutes for the Italian stokers who had walked out. All the citizens sympathized with the strikers, as did the Common Council, and the strike soon assumed an anti-Austrian character. There were violent uprisings. The Austrian troops fired into the crowd. Fourteen citizens were killed and hundreds wounded. The rural mobs, blindly clerical and therefore Austrian sympathizers, hating the Italian military element, soon joined themselves to the stoker-soldiers. Then a group of Triestian students, all sons of the working class, and a group of young workmen who were Italian sympathizers, with one accord, decided to counteract the opposition to Italianity by the diffusion of Mazzinian principles—"synthesizing in a wonderful manner the idea of social justice with the idea of national independence and political freedom."

The struggle of these two united groups was impetuous and far reaching. It brought out a new spirit of emulation and incentive among the Italians, embracing

every walk of life. The Mazzinian organ *L'Emancipazione* was founded. These same Mazzinians and the seceding Socialists founded the *Camera del Lavoro* (the Bureau of Labor). Popular study and sporting clubs were organized. From Trieste the propaganda spread rapidly into Istria, Friuli, Dalmatia and Fiume. At Goritz, for instance, the whole movement was handled by the Mazzinians, and intelligently and honestly guided by Francesco Spazzapan. The Austrian government naturally turned the weapons of persecution against the Mazzinians.

In 1903 the first directive Mazzinian Committee was arrested and prosecuted at Trieste. This committee was composed of Riccardo De Haag, Pietro Caucich, Eugenio Fonda, Ado Grego and Angelo Scocchi. Luciano Magrini succeeded in escaping to Italy. In all of the other Irredentist cities arrests and trials followed in quick succession. Many were arrested in Trieste and many shut in the prisons of Capodistria, Rovigno, Pola and Goritz. Pietro Magrini passed two years in the prison at Goritz. Luigi Duchie of Trieste spent his time in the Capodistrian jail; Ferruccio Kalteneisen in the castle of Laibach; Mario Sterle in the prisons of Pilsen; Giovanni Grion at Marburg; and Giuseppe Vidali of Trieste was dragged through the Austrian galleys from Pola to Ravigno, to Trieste, to Laibach, to Klagenfurt, and to Marburg.

But one of the most vital questions, that which gave the gravest concern to the Italian subjects of Austria, and to the Austrian government as well, was the question of education.

The Italian Irredentists could not tolerate the thought that their children were obliged to feed their minds in the Austrian schools with Teutonic culture, which was opposed to their own intellectual traditions. Therefore for years and years — with no little trouble and with not a few financial sacrifices, but with success — they endeavored to implant in almost all of their cities subject to Austria (Trieste, Trent, Pola and minor cities) elementary and technical schools, gymnasiums and lyceums, with only Italian teachers, profes-

sors, language, and methods of teaching. They maintained them at the expense of their municipalities and their private associations, the *National League* and the *Dante Alighieri*.[1]

By means of contributions from cities, associations, and individuals, Italian schools were opened everywhere, especially in the parts which were seriously threatened with Teutonic culture.

The *National League* at the beginning of the present war was represented at Trieste, and in Istria, Eastern Friuli, and Dalmatia by about one hundred committees. Julian Venice alone (that is, the three provinces of Goritzia, Gradisca, Trieste and Istria) had more than sixty of their own schools; it assisted one hundred and forty others and spent more than one-half million crowns a year in support of Italian schools.

Giovani Pattini, an Irredentist, in his recent volume, *Italia Irridenta*, says:

> This same *National League* is the only institution which teaches, with its humble propaganda and its limited needs, the first word of a national conscience.
>
> At the schools the children — from the third or fourth classes of the gymnasium — begin to collect money, twenty soldi a week, which they deposit in the hands of a cashier elected by themselves. With these weekly twenty soldi, augmented by little entertainments, they accumulate thousands of lire a year. In the summer the girls extend their hands to strangers asking an obolus for the *National League*, which educates the children of the people to be Italian; and no one refuses them.
>
> At Trieste, as at Pola, at Goritzia, at Zara, at Trent, at Pisino, they give little entertainments and take up collections, all for the benefit of the *National League*. The people hasten to give generously money which they would not pay for taxes to the

[1] In 1885 in the Trentino the *Italian Pro Patria Society* was founded, whose teachings were also diffused in Istria. On account of a greeting voted to the *Dante Alighieri* in 1890 (the Society with its central committee in Rome having for its object the diffusion of the Italian language throughout the world) by the National Congress of Trente, and because the city refused to come under the Austrian colors, the *Pro Patria* was dissolved by the Austrian Government.

On the ruins of the *Pro Patria* Society the *National League* was formed expressly for the defense of the mother tongue and for the diffusion of popular Italian instruction among children and youths of [the Irredentists. This *League*, following a more intelligent and prudent policy, was able to regulate itself.

Austrian government; nor would they give to any political association.

When relatives or friends die, instead of spending money for flowers and useless eulogies, they send, in their memory, increased contributions to the *National League*.

The *League* had more than 42,000 members among 800,000 Italian subjects of Austria; the annual dues were fifty centesimi a year for each member. Indeed, the latest reports show that its income has passed more than half a million a year, aided by the festivals and voluntary contributions.

Thus — from the sums gathered in the cities and villages of the Irredentists, in their hours of joy and sorrows, from those who conscientiously love the Patria and those who regard it as a dream — the little Italian schools rise. They rise in the cities of the Dalmatian coast; in the stony villages of Istria, little square white or yellow schoolhouses, isolated in the midst of the homes of enemies, on hostile ground. These same little schoolhouses have seen hissing and execrating crowds pass before their doors; they have endured stonings, assaults, devastations; but they have always remained and every day they have opened their doors to their little soldiers.

The *National League* has never closed a school. Wherever it enters, it plants the Italian flag; and the Italian flag will never be lowered!

The *National League* attracted to its schools simple souls with the promise of giving them knowledge, bread and clothes, and sent them out saturated with ideals and ready to sacrifice for the League clothes, bread and life.

The *National League* smiled on the childish festivals, but between their songs and the lights of the Christmas trees they taught them a virile patriotism. It also gave money and clothes to the youth of the intermediate and high schools, not as philanthropy but always with the severe injunction that this was a loan which in the future must be paid with usury in love of Country, in sacrifices and in labor.

And thus the *National League*, on the soil subject to Austria, became a symbol of a longed-for Patria, and the hymns sung in the schools were sung like war songs.

The hymn of the *National League*, at one time modified and corrected by the imperial Austrian censor, was finally written by a highly esteemed Triestian poet, Riccardo Pitteri,

who recently died in exile, after the Austrians had destroyed his home. The hymn is as follows:

Long live Dante!
This Sweet word
Five peoples consoles
And fraternally unites them in a single thought.

Oh! echo this name in the Alps,
The valleys and forests,
On the shores of Trieste,
In the byways of Trent.

Repeat it, O relics
Of Aquileia and Salona!
The arches and temples in every place where sounds
Sweetly our *Sì*.

From the Adige to Timavo
Which hasten to the sea,
On the coasts sound this name,
In the valleys, on the mountains, on the plains.

Long live Dante! Be this the motto
Of the five peoples
Which the sacred poetry
Of a language has united.

Long live Dante! Five leaves
United give life to one flower.
From the union of fingers
Comes the strength of the hand.

But if the problem of Italian education in the provinces of the Irredentists was settled for the elementary and high schools (which the Austrian government was obliged unwillingly to tolerate and legalize, in order not to add too much fuel to the flames), it was not equally solved for the universities, which were the center of culture where the mind of a people is formed. The young Irredentist youths who had studied in the Italian gymnasiums and lyceums in

their own regions, if they did not wish to finish their studies in Teuton universities where everything was Teuton, even to the language of the beadles, were obliged to receive their diplomas from the University of Padua or Pavia, or indeed Rome, as Oberdan was obliged to do, and face an enormous expense,[1] notwithstanding the fact that the Austrian government was forced to recognize as legal the degrees given by the universities of Italy. But not all the Triestians, Istrians, Trentini, Friulians,[1] and Dalmatians who studied could afford the necessary expense of remaining in cities so far away from their homes. For this reason they demanded the founding of an Italian university in Trieste, or at least in some city of the unredeemed regions. The Austrian Government turned a deaf ear to all such demands.

The Italian students, however, forced by the modest financial conditions of their families to remain in the Austrian universities, did not conceal their wrath at the injustice. Their attitude irritated the Austrian students, who with bad grace tolerated recriminations of any sort in "their own home." The strings finally became too tense and snapped for the first time in 1906, at the University at Innsbruck, where a fight broke out between the Austrian and Trentini students. These latter, greatly inferior in number to their adversaries, were overcome. The Austrian Government intervened and began to investigate the reason for the friction or at least it pretended to do so, and resorted to subterfuges; finally it promised to create, not a university (that would have been too much), but a simple law faculty with a seat at Trent or at Rovereto, while the Italians preferred Trieste. It promised, but did not fulfill the promise. It even let the promise die.

But the Irredentists did not renounce their ideals. On the contrary they were all the more stimulated by such ideals.

In 1908, Italy decided to place before the tomb of Dante at Ravenna an *Eternal Lamp*. The Italian regions subject

[1] The Austrian Government was obliged to recognize the diplomas of the young Irredentist students from the Athenaeums in Italy.

to Austria spontaneously offered the amphora. Riccardo Zampieri, editor of the *Independent* of Trieste and to whom must be given the credit for the initiative of this enterprise, on September 23, 1907, wrote thus:

> There will burn therefore on the tomb of the greatest bard of Italy — who is the most potent symbol of Italianity — an eternal lamp adorned with the Florentine Lily and with the Lion of St. Mark. And the inextinguishable flame is destined to have a splendid significance. It is to be fed with pure oil; and the amphora which is to receive this oil, we wish might be offered by Trieste. This is our idea, *alere flammen*. This vase should be engraved with the halbert of St. Sergius, and with the arms of the provinces condemned to fight in order to defend and keep intact the traces of their Italianity.

This noble and patriotic venture had an overwhelming success, because not only Trieste, but all of the Italian provinces subject to Austria contributed to it by spontaneous offerings. And the same *Independent* of Trieste wished also to offer the fire with which the symbolic flame should be lighted the first time; the Journal caused a box of matches from the *National League* to be incased in a gold box and beautifully engraved with the following dedication: "To give life to the flame. The *Independent of Trieste*."

And both of the relics, the lamp and the box of matches, were carried to Ravenna by the best citizens of the regions of the Irredentists, in a great and solemn pilgrimage.

Florence, the native city of the honored poet, offered the oil and assumed the obligation to furnish it daily and perpetually, "in order that the flame shall not die," in atonement for the exile to which she had condemned her most glorious son.

In the same year, 1908, after Austria had annexed Bosnia and was about to invade Servia, the Mazzinians of Pola scattered proclamations among the armies of Austria inciting the Italians not to fight against the independence of the people of Servia. Many were arrested and condemned by the Austrian police.

In the autumn of the same year at the re-opening of the schools in Austria, the students of the Irredentist

regions of the University of Vienna agitated in every lawful manner and through their deputies in the Reichstag to try to induce the Austrian government once and for all to maintain the promises which it had made concerning the founding of an Italian University or at least of a faculty at Trieste, Trent, or Rovereto. In one of the student meetings in the University, where there were not more than two hundred Italian students, they were unexpectedly assaulted by two thousand Teuton students who did not hesitate to resort to the use of revolvers against their companions. The onslaught which ensued was violent and bloody.

The Italian students defended themselves with admirable courage and vigor; but they were overcome by numbers and also by the partisanship of the Viennese police. Many were seriously wounded.

This fact had an echo of indignation and sorrow in all of the Italian provinces subject to Austria. Suddenly protests sprang up everywhere in which even the women took part.

Italy chafed and growled like a lioness whose young had been maltreated. From the Alps to Sicily the people, led by the students, ran through the streets of all the cities invoking evil on and threatening the government; in the public squares they insulted and burned the Austrian flag. At Rome the palace of the Austrian Ambassador was assailed with stones and missiles. All of the windows were broken. The students of the entire nation enrolled themselves in the *National Marksman's Club;* everywhere large sums of money were collected and sent to the National League and to the Dante Alighieri of the Irredentist regions. The committee *Pro Italia Irredenta* on November 24, 1908, published a proclamation inciting them to war against Austria:

Brothers of Italy! Awake, awake from your shameful torpor! Take on your former vigor and your indomitable faith. Awake! At Vienna our brothers have been slain. A horde of barbarians, drunk with hate and with blood, has assaulted our students in the temple which should have been sacred to science, who demanded an Italian university, the only bulwark with which to defend their intellectual patrimony and hold on high their ideal as a symbol.

This new offense must not be left unpunished. The generous

instincts of the Italian race must not die. For too long they have bowed the head to every insult of strangers. The pact of hate between the Italian and the Austrian people is again sealed with the cowardly assault of Vienna. We must arise against the stranger who offends, who tramples upon, and murders.

Against the servile and vile policy of the Italian government we must impose the policy of the people; without renunciations and without cowardice.

Brothers of Italy! He who endures the slaughter of his own brothers is a coward, but he is also a coward who sleeps and does not hear their moanings. The words, *Liberty and Revenge*, must not be strangled by the bad policies of rulers. To war, then! This cry rises from the unavenged tomb of Guglielmo Oberdan. It rises from the tombs of all the martyrs made by Austria.

Arise to war, Brothers of Italy! Awake! Be united in your holy wrath and your holy cry! Arise! The Garibaldian epopee has need of new and luminous pages! The Idea has need of new martyrs. The Patria needs restitution.

All that the Italian government did was to make a diplomatic remonstrance to the Austrian government. This latter pretended to be a little touched and again promised to found an Italian University of Law in one of the Irredentist cities. But they were as usual "Austrian promises" and were never fulfilled. The Austrian Government, however, continued its persecutions of the Irredentist leaders.

In 1909 there was a sensational trial against twenty-four leaders of the Mazzinian movement in the Julian regions. The *Emancipazione* of Trieste was obliged to suspend its publication because all of its editors, managers, and writers were imprisoned.

But these persecutions, lawsuits, and condemnations could not extinguish the natural longings of Italianity of the Irredentist regions:

At Trieste, that most cosmopolitan city of the region, there were formed two distinct citizens' classes—thus wrote the young Triestian Attilio Tamaro in a pamphlet published during March and April 1915 — One was official and the other Italian, but they never met each other even on neutral ground. Nothing could change the Triestians from their attitude of hate; the offers of material benefits or of favorable laws made by the Austrian

governors were all without effect. Their avoidance of everything Austrian was extreme. Editors of newspapers, municipal authorities, professors, on all occasions showed that they never even knew the names of the chancellors of the Austrian government. The Emperor of Austria was never named in the communal acts with the pronoun *our*.

The Triestians would never tolerate an Austrian government, even though liberal or friendly to them; they always fiercely demanded that the Austrian government should leave their home. To prove this it is necessary to recall some recent names and facts. Felice Venezian, in the Common Council meeting, predicted a day in which the Triestians should sound their Italian bells.[1] Ernesto Spadoni, who was in the same Council of Trieste, apostrophizes the situation thus: *May not a ray from the star that shone above the Tiber some day radiate on the horizon of our Irredentist province?* May not the cry of "Viva L'Italia!" resound thousands and thousands of times at Trieste against the Austrian government? May not the hymn of Garibaldi be sung hundreds of times under the same Austrian lieutenancy of police that committed every sort of violence? May not the festival of the Centennial of Verdi in 1913 be repeated, when the Austrian police prohibited a chorus from the aria *Va Pensiero* from *Nabucco*, from being sung in the great public square of Trieste, and notwithstanding this there were thousands who sang it, thus replacing the meager voices of the chorus? Must we not remember the young Triestians who many times raised their flag on the City Hall or who painted the walls of the offices of the police with the Italian tri-colors in the night? Or the old Triestian patriot, Lorenzetti, who before he died some months ago, said to his relatives on *that day* to come and knock at his tomb and tell him that *Italy had finally reached Trieste?* Or the Triestian, Gino Mauro, who weeping on his death bed, begged the physician to keep him alive only until Trieste was free?

And thus the hate of Austria was so deep that the Triestians always lived apart from the Austrians. It was considered a great dishonor for an Italian to invite to his house an Austrian

[1] Toward the end of the fourteenth century Charles VIII of France descended into Italy and claimed the sovereignty of Florence. Piero Capponi, standard bearer of the city, was entrusted, with three other deputies, to treat with the pretender; but this latter wished to impose iniquitous conditions on them. Piero Capponi tore up the papers which contained these conditions, crying proudly: "You will sound your war trumpet, and we will respond with our bells." The French King for this act thought it wise to change his policy and accord moderate conditions to Florence.

official, or for an Irredentist girl to permit an official to show her special attention.

No official festival was ever permitted to come to a peaceful finish by the citizens of Trieste. And in the popular festivals they always showed themselves hostile, as for instance in the launching of a ship which seemed only a festival of workmen. There was never a municipal band formed in Trieste because no one would play at the government festivals. And, incredible as it may seem, the national party met almost every year to commemorate with public demonstrations the death of Oberdan. There was not a public square or street in Trieste which was given an Austrian name. All had Italian names. For example, the street which ran in front of the barracks where Oberdan was hanged was courageously named for Carducci.

The Triestians, whether fighting, or in their festivals, when they asked for aid, in their numerous societies, in their great restaurants, in their schools and libraries, always and everywhere by their Italian attitude demanded their rights, and were in a constant conspiracy against the Austrian government.

Thus they awaited their liberty. Thus were they rendered worthy of their liberty.

XIV

A proclamation inciting Italy to war against Austria, sent by the Triestians to each non-socialist deputy of the Italian National Parliament on the day when the new legislature opened in Rome, February 1914.

Honorable Sir: Trieste, the city of Italy as yet under the dominion of the stranger, on the day upon which the Italian national parliament is reopened, turns to your Excellency with a brotherly admonition and with a request.

With an admonition, because it prays your Excellency that you will ponder and remember that the foreign government, master of Trieste, is making every effort to change to Slavic a city which geographically, historically, and by the will of the people should be consecrated to the service of Italy; that Austria in making Slavic Trieste and Julian Venice, not only does not place a barrier against the Slavs but instead she brings them inside of the confines of Italy; that Trieste has always been an Italian city governed by Austrian laws and administered by Slavs, because

all of the offices of state are in the hands of Slavs: that the Austrian government, making Slavs of Julian Venice and Trieste, intends to make it more difficult for Italy to rescue them; it tends also to "Balkanize" these regions, and above all Trieste, and to concentrate above them, and to seize from the ports of the Kingdom of Italy the commerce and politics of the western Balkans; that the resistance of Istria and Goritz is reduced to extremities because of the condition of their counterforts and by the force of this Slavic invasion, Trieste — although fighting with faith and with love and at great sacrifice — is reduced to the last resource of national defense; that the wealth which Trieste would receive from her geographic position, if she were a city of Italy, would then be national wealth instead of being enjoyed by foreigners; that Trieste, united by national right to the Patria, would carry to it the sure domination of all the Balkan commerce and would be one of the most powerful means of resolving the Mediterranean problem, with the possession of the great lines of commerce which Trieste has, and always will have with Greece and the Levant.

Because of these main facts—confident that your Excellency will deliberate upon them considering what a stupendous amount of national interest is contained in the problem of the national independence of Trieste — the Triestians pray your Excellency, for your own honor and for the honor of Italy, that you will be moved to push the national forces toward the definite accomplishment of national unity; that you will co-operate in this cause, and in consequence of this, that to the present legislature will be accorded the high honor of proclaiming the reconstitution of Italy within its natural confines; that one day you will be able to say with pride that you contributed with your work and your votes to the resolving of the great problem of the liberty and Italianity of the Adriatic.

If the time of hesitation is passed, we hope that in the parliament of the new Italy will be found those who will affirm the right of the nation to the possession of Trieste, as in 1861 the right of the nation to Rome was affirmed.

Trieste, February 1914.

XV

A proclamation inciting Italy to war against Austria, sent by the Triestians to each socialist deputy of the Italian National Parliament on the day when the new Legislature opened in Rome, February 1914.

Honorable Sir: Trieste, the city of Italy which is as yet subject to foreigners, on the day when the National parliament reopens, and while the national struggle is going on, and also while lies are being diffused by those who are interested in denying the truth, and while, moreover, it is probable that in consequence of coming events the national struggle of Julian Venice and of Trieste will come before the Italian parliament for discussion, we beg of your Excellency to ponder upon the following unassailable facts: that the geography, history, laws, nationality and will of the greater part of the citizens declare that Trieste is an Italian city, and belongs to Italy; that the Austrian Government and the Slavs are making an enormous effort to change and denaturalize the Italianity of Trieste, intensifying immigration and seeming to give equal rights to the immigrants and Italians; that Trieste, in the final count, is a city of Italy governed by Austrian laws and these laws are administered by Slavs, all of the offices of the state being in the hands of the Slavs; that the Slavs carry on the struggle in compact masses composed in a minor part of the tradesmen and in a major part of the proletariat; that the natural invasion of the Slavs depends on the fact that the city belongs to Austria, because if it did not it would not be deprived of its natural rights and it would take part in the Italian state, and her great labor markets would be open only to Italian laborers; that this artificial invasion accomplishes in a great measure the Slavization of Trieste and Julian Venice, and this condition is demanded by the Austrian government to force that region to lose its rights and to make the duty of national rescue more difficult for Italy; and besides that, to *Balkanize* Trieste in order to concentrate in it, politically and commercially, the Western Balkans; that peace between nations is impossible because the borders of each nation cannot be definitely determined, and the national struggle is a fact of natural history and therefore cannot be imprescribed because, on the shoulders of the Slavs who have immigrated, press millions of Slavonians and Croatians who work toward the conquest of the

Adriatic; that if the theory of the equality of immigrants holds, which they wish to impose today on Trieste, then the Slavs, because they are immigrants, have the right to denaturalize the Italian city; if this theory had obtained in other times, Italy would yet be the slave of strangers; that there is no other solution of the national struggle but this: the defeat of Italianity, or the political union with the National State to which Trieste already belongs by ideals, and by cultural and moral affiliations; that Irredentism synthesizes in itself and expresses itself in a conception which cannot fail to be sacred to every man: the conception of *Liberty*; that a Slavic Irredentism — after Trieste shall be joined to the nation for the definite accomplishment of Italian unity — would not exist in Nice. It would be as absurd as an Irredentism of the Italians of Marseilles.

You must consider that if you had been a citizen of Milan before 1859, or of Venice before 1866, you would certainly have fought for national independence against an alien government.

Therefore because of these facts and reasons, the Triestians wish, for your honor and for the nation's honor, that you may one day say with pride that you, with your work, with your votes, have co-operated to the freedom of the last great city of Italy which is as yet subject to the foreigner.

Trieste, February 1914.

XVI

A proclamation inciting Italy to war against Austria by the Italians of the Irredentist provinces of Gradisca, Goritz, Trieste and Istria (Julian Venice) and the Trentino during the month of April 1914, "for the Unity of the Patria."[1]

The *Doors of Italy*, Julian Venice and Trentino, are ours, but Austria has known how to hold them under her dominion with the idea of always having her feet in Italy for the convenience of her Adriatic policy and to give to Italy a sense of her perpetual military inferiority with her tyrannical incumbency within the boundaries.

The *Doors of Italy* open from our soil, especially Julian Venice, because these latter have the two great passes of Predil and the

[1] This proclamation was to have been a part of a special edition of a paper, but instead it was distributed secretly at Trieste and published in the *Voice of the Patria*, April 4, 1914.

Porte di Ferro to Nevoso, and the greatest pass, Monte Re, through which the barbarians always entered Italy as far back as before the Christian era; through which Austria can easily turn an army into Italy.

Our regions belong to Italy, because such they have always declared themselves, and because, as such, they have been officially recognized. They have been Italian regions since Italy existed; *physically*, because the Julian Alps constituted, with indisputable evidence, the natural boundaries of the country; *politically*, because they have been Italian regions since the time when Rome constituted Italy; *morally*, because they have made their talents, their purposes and their faith tributary to the greatness of the Nation, not less than the other provinces of Italy.

Now these regions of Italy, fertilized by the blood of countless sons, which from Aquileia to Albona defended the borders of Italy against barbarians; this ground produces men in which national defense constitutes the most powerful reason for life. These regions of Italy, we say, are the only ones which do not obey Italian laws, which are not ruled by an Italian government, who have not for the ruler of their Italian life the King of Italy. While all of the other provinces of Italy have been liberated from the domination of strangers, or from the domination of anti-unionists, Julian Venice and Trentino are the only regions which are outside of the national unity; which are still under foreign domination and are subject properly to the Austrian Government, which has attempted to kill Italy; to that Austrian Government, which in order to hold Italy in servitude and to destroy her dreams, her ideals, her will, synthesized in the word *Liberty*, sent fanatic and ferocious soldiers to construct gallows in every city, to make bloody every field, to fill all of the prisons, to beat, chain, rob, sack, hang, shoot, wherever it knew that an Italian heart beat with an ardent longing for liberty! Julian Venice and Trentino are the last, the only regions of Italy, under a regime of violence, which as yet serves that Austrian Government.

Is it right?

Is it right that, while all other Italians within the *natural* boundaries of Italy, live in freedom, are called Italian citizens, and are governed by Italian laws, we, the Italians of Julian Venice and Trentino, we alone must be called Austrian subjects; that we alone must be ruled by Austrian and Slavo-Teutonic laws? If we are Italian, why must we obey Teuton laws and Slavic bureaucrats?

There is no one but can see the iniquity of our condition; there is no one but can see the moral misery which chokes us more and more every day under this foreign tyranny, while the other Italians in the regions of national liberty are always raised to renewed enthusiasms by the powerful spirit of the nation.

But we, Italians of Julian Venice, together with those of Trentino, are not the only ones of Italy not yet united to the kingdom of Italy. We Italians of Goritz, of Trieste, of Istria, have also the misfortune to see our cities invaded by Slavs, who descend in flocks from the opening of the Alps, attracted by the sea and by the cities which promise riches; descend like sheep as they go to fat pastures, by the will of the Austrian Government which wishes to justify with an appearance of fairness the indisputable iniquity of its domination; which wishes to fill it with our enemies and denationalize our region, the last region of Italy to remain in its power.

From every part, and in every part the Slavs extend their force. There are more than 40,000 in the commune of Trieste; there are 10,000 in Goritz; there are 10,000 at Pola. Their mere presence surrounding Pirano insults its history. They swarm about the country of Parenzo. Montona and Albona are reduced to the extreme in their desperate defense of their municipalities. Pinguente, Pisino, Rozzo, each pressed with marvelous concord into a single purpose for Italy, are overruled and tormented by Slavs of the country who have seized their municipalities and are protected by iniquitous laws.

In every city, in every village, to the accompaniment of insults and challenges, the Austrian color is given to everything. At the side of the adversary, who with the all-powerful aid of banks and of the State invades our regions to violate and "Balkanize" us, there are internal foes of our national integrity — the socialists — faithful to the ideas of the Austrian state, and needing the aid of the Slavs for the electoral struggle. These internal adversaries deride those who fear the Slavic invasion, those who advocate the necessity of defense, and those who invoke liberty and independence. In the struggle against these two adversaries, the internal strength of our people is consolidated, the compages become granitelike, the soul becomes daring, energies become vibrant with power, while the secret mystery of the Italian race — that secret, which has protected all of the rest of Italy from barbarians — will save for all time to come our Italianity from contamination, from the destruction of its political force, from the fate which

came to Dalmatia. We will fight always and incessantly for representation in all public affairs and in every institution. Here we will conquer and there we may lose. But national defense will be strenuous and untiring.

But this is not enough.

Above national defense against the Slavs, there must be the struggle for liberty, the struggle for national independence for which we have the same right that all the rest of Italy has had, — *the struggle for the definite accomplishment of Italian Unity!*

For this ideal, which must be transformed into most concrete reality, for this ideal, more than for national defense, we must battle with the greatest energy. And above all with faith. But with a generic faith turning with saint-like patience toward no uncertain and nebulous future, but with a clear and precise faith, which is founded on facts and which leads to facts.

We must all fight, young and old. The young must form a militia and must work and agitate to make the Italian and Austrian governments understand that we want freedom, we want liberty and that Italy is not yet a unit. The mature men, especially those who have received from citizens or from institutions representative positions, must with their authority work for the unified rights of cities and of the citizens whom they represent, and one and all must work with fervor and tenacity.

And we hope that in the Kingdom we shall find co-operation multiplied. The Government, the deputies, and the people must be roused; it will be necessary to conquer indifference and vacuous sentimentalism, diffidence, cynicism and cowardice; the hypocrisies of diplomacy and of politicians and the imbecilities of demagogues. We must even by violent agitation impress on the Italian conscience the problem of *National Unity*. We must bring our problem to the attention of Europe and impress it with all of its contents of justice, by every means and by every sacrifice.

Thus, we can do this today with faith more sure and with a more serene consciousness of our responsibility because today the problem of our liberty is synthesized in the name of Trieste with a great importance, not only respecting the right which we have to independence, but also for the international policy of the Kingdom. Trieste is today for Italy the key to the Orient. Trieste now holds for the whole of Italy the commercial domination of the Levant which formerly belonged to Venice. The possession of Trieste means the guarantee of peace with the nation that at present has its confines in Italy; a guarantee against the Slavic

status of tomorrow; it means an absolute guarantee against every possible conflict which Italy might have with other enemies.

Therefore today, we will, in fighting for our liberty, teach Italy what national interest exists in the eastern Adriatic. So to fight means helping Italy to open for herself the doors to the Orient; it means pushing Italy into taking a more solid and more secure position before or by the side of other powers. Therefore we fight not only for an ideal of regional liberty, but for the greatness of Italy, for a vaster wealth, for a more splendid future for the nation.

Will this agitation for unity, intense, violent, tenacious, provoke the Austrian Government to repression and to a larger favoritism to the Slavs? First of all, we must ask if our condition could be worse than it now is. And then we must regard the indisputable truth that all repressions, and all favoritism do nothing but impose our problem more effectively on the nation and on Europe.

To work, then, all, each one according to his abilities. Time presses. The Irredentist storm and internal strife shake the foundations of the Austrian Empire. . . . The problem of Austria is put in discussion before a Europe which has latterly exalted the principle of nationality.

It is time therefore that we work with all our might to place our rights in a diplomatic situation which prepares the near tomorrow. Thus in this manner Italy will not be absent with her rights, with her interests, in the international discussion of the Austrian problem.

To work, then, with a single purpose in your hearts. *Viva L'Italia!*

XVII

The Italian banner is hoisted at Trieste on the tower of San Giusto and over the harbor of Muggia in December, 1914. Thousands of Irredentist Italians rush to offer themselves to the Patria in the present great war against Austria, 1914–1915.

The outbreak of the great war at the end of July 1914, provoked by the ultimatum of Austria to Servia, rekindled the hopes even in the least hopeful Irredentist Italians for the liberation of the lands synthesized by the binomial Trent-Trieste.

In September and October, 1914 — thus writes the Triestian, Angelo Scocchi — Trieste above all trembles for action, and insurrection against Austria seems imminent. The patriots want to know what echo this will have in Italy before encouraging it.

The Triestians were counseled not to move, not to hurry an event which must be fought out when begun, and not to compromise the fate of Italy and not to drag it into an immature intervention.

Notwithstanding this, on the morning of December 1, 1914, a great Italian flag waved from the tower of San Giusto at Trieste and another one from the flagstaff harbor of Muggia.

On December 2nd, the city was full of little handbills inciting the people to refuse to give contributions to the Austrian Red Cross. Several citizens were arrested, among whom was the Mazzinian, Marcello Vidali, who was first imprisoned in the Castle of Laibach, and then in the prison of Marburg.

Many flocked into the Austrian army; the greater part of these finished by voluntarily going as prisoners of the Russians and Serbs; others sacrificed their young lives in Galicia and Bosnia, with a last invocation to distant Italy.

But several thousands — challenging the rigors of the Austrian government and every sort of danger — succeeded between 1914 and the beginning of 1915 in passing the boundary, and scattered themselves in the provinces of northern Italy and in Rome, where they offered their blood for the liberation of the regions subject to the slavery of Austria and for their union to the Patria.

XVIII

Gabriele d'Annunzio reaffirms and exalts the Italianity of Trieste in the garden of the Palace of Andrea Doria, at Genoa (May 6, 1915), upon receiving a gift in plaster of the Triestian Lion, the original of which is in the wall of one of the houses of the Giustiniani.

Brief words will I utter, so much more eloquent are the memories of things, of signs, of fate in this gift which I receive with a throbbing heart and a pure faith which makes me more worthy to receive it; there also comes over us an anxiety for that Trieste

which suffers the starvation of the soul, violated, torn, tormented, oppressed with a ferocity every day more damnable.

We feel her actual presence here. She stands before us as that sculptured urn, as that statue. She stands erect before us, with all of her wounds gaping, with all of her bruises, with the marks of every insult, as the sufferer at the stake.

Ah! we begin to be ashamed of ourselves for talking too much, we now understand well the crude words of that one of *The Thousand* — great soul in a little body — who last evening cried out at the banquet with the voice of an assailant: *Better than words, I would rather take again the gun, O companions!*

This is a Garibaldian motto, well said, and well heard in Genoa.

Not this cast which I will devoutly keep in custody, but the Lion of the Istrian Stone, taken from the glorious wall in another day of maritime consecration. Genoa will send again magnificent restitution to Trieste by the path of the sea. The ship will pass Caprera[1] and it will hear the roaring of the rocks, and will sail toward the Adriatic. And the dead son of Lamba, buried in the triumphant waters, and Luciano d'Oria before Pola, and Gasparo Spinola before Trieste, and your other terrible ones, will reappear in an epiphany of love joined luminously to the avenged ones of Lissa. And the Lion of St. Mark brought into the Adriatic by a ship of Genoa, will mean for the Italians: *This deep sea, where the crest of every wave is a blossom of our glory, is again and always will be called, in the language of all nations,* The Gulf of Venice.

XIX

Words spoken by Gabriele d'Annunzio in Genoa, May 7, 1915, to the exiles of Dalmatia, upon receiving from them the gift of a book, printed in Genoa, in which the Dalmatians affirm, demonstrate and defend the Italianity of Dalmatia.

This book of love, of faith, and of rebuke an Italian should today receive on his bended knees, humiliated and in an attitude to ask pardon, to make amends. To remain on my feet before you reverently, but not ashamed, is permitted to me because of a con-

[1] This little island near Sardinia became celebrated because of being the favorite sojourn of Garibaldi and because the Hero died and was buried there.

sciousness that I never have forgotten that which Antonio Baiamonti, the *admirable Podestà* of Spálato, called the *younger daughter of Italy* and that which the Dantesque Tommaséo called the *Second Italy*. But I hope that the God of wars will permit me to bend the knee in a near future before one of those, your altars, under whose tables the fathers, weeping, placed the folded republican flag of St. Mark.

If I, in Genoa, name Sebenico, Zara, and Traù, the bones of Luciano d'Oria, who knows the salt of the Adriatic, would rise from his grave in St. Mathew's. His victory and his death were commemorated on the same date that we assembled on the shore at Quarto,[1] on May 5th. I see the Dalmatian cities, bloody and suffocating, before the sword of Donato Zeno, who annihilated the admiral on the bridge while he as yet was crying from his torn mouth: "*St. George! St. George!*"

But another vision comes to me of another victory taken from the inscrolled white lists and black lists of naval times. It is as an allegory to our long blindness. In the waters of Curzola,[2] Lamba Doria ordered his galleys, when the wind was favorable, to throw dust of quick lime into the eyes of the Venetians commanded by Dandolo; and he put in confusion those desperate blind ones.

It seems to me that in such hostile blindness we have remained afflicted after the disaster of Lissa. We have not seen, we have not wished to see that which the conquerors have done without truce, without mercy: to obliterate every vestige of our domain on the Eastern coast; to destroy every trace of Italianity from the beautiful Latin shore not only consecrated with blood, but with the spirit; not only conquered by arms but by the arts; not only ours by ancient sovereignty but because of new ideas; not only rich in mute relics, but in eloquent culture. We have abandoned you for years and years to the most iniquitious persecutions, O generous brothers of ours who have opposed courage to menace, patience to injustice, virile gentleness to wicked atrocities! We have not dared to help, not even to comfort the sad and silent fight continued by you, O faithful of Rome, to preserve the blessed tongue of Italy, to defend the documents of your high origin, to keep yourself Italian against everyone and against everything. As the sailors of Dandolo, we have diverted dolorous eyes from the battle.

[1] At Quarto on May 5, 1915, a monument was unveiled which was erected in honor of *The Thousand* by Garibaldi. D'Annunzio delivered the comemmoration address.

[2] Island and canal of the Adriatic on the coast of Dalmatia.

We ask your pardon. We make amends. Finally our eyes are re-opened, cured by the health-giving wind which blows away from so much destruction, from so much virtue, to so much horror, to so much love. We should weep with remorse and with pity, O brothers, but we do not weep; instead, we steadfastly watch Fate. This book, which you place in my hands, is an evidence of your claim to possession. It is brief, but of great weight. It says to us clearly and concisely in the manner of Rome that Dalmatia is of Italy by divine and by human right; by the grace of God, which fashioned terrestial figures in such a way that each race sculpturally recognizes his own kind; by the *will of man*, who multiplies the beauty of the shores by erecting monuments to his glories and carving the signs of his most arduous hopes.

This book is a Dalmatian gospel on which we can swear.

Under the Latin power of Rome, of the Popes, of Venice, as under the barbarous power of the Goths, the Lombards, the Franks the German Ottos, the Byzantines, the Hungarians, the Austrians, the civil life of that part of the coast as well as the civil life of this part of the coast was always in origin and in essence Italian. It was, it is, and will be. Not the Teutons of the Alps, not the Slavonians of Carso, neither the Magyars of Puszta, not the Croatian who ignores or falsifies history, not even the Turk who disguises himself as an Albanian, no one can arrest the fatal rhythm of accomplishment, the Roman rhythm. I tell you this, brothers, but you know it. On this Dalmatian gospel we can take oath.

The ancient Roman consular road which leads to Salona to cross Bosnia has not yet been battered down. It is, as you know, the only road that binds together the little hamlets and scattered villages. It is so well directed, so well constructed, so well consolidated, that men must follow it to the end of time.

More distant, on the other side of Mount Kvaratch, the mighty ruins of a Roman laborers' city rises in the midst of meadows and forests in view of the cerulean heights of the war-like Servia.

Now it seems that the *genius loci* is not carved in stone, but survives in its greatness, and with its breath fills the courts of justice, the tribunal, the hypocaust, the altars and the hearth stones, the castles, the excavations on the right shore of the rushing Saso, their walls as yet well preserved, which fifteen voracious centuries have not been able to destroy.

Of what value then are the efforts of barbarians against the

law of Rome? There, where we have put such foundations, there, the *genius loci* awaits us; there we will return, there we will rediscover the ancient relics and will carve new symbols. If narrow are your shores O Dalmatians, ample is the civilization which illuminates them. You are almost at the border of the toga, but the whole toga is Roman.

Be of good cheer, my young companions. The time of serving is finished, the time of suffering has ended. The time to fight and to redeem has come; and the time to liberate and to avenge is imminent.

At Lissa the young Dalmatian naval officer, Giovanni Ivancich, fell like a hero. He perhaps resembled some of you who look at me with the light of battle kindling in your lion-like eyes.

What is your name, you who are blushing, O boy? Fame perhaps will tell me tomorrow; Liberty may re-echo it to me from across the sea.

On this gospel of Dalmatia, however, we swear with a single soul.

Thus may it be, for the sons of sons and for the centuries of centuries.

THIRD PART

I

The assassination of the Archduke Francis Ferdinand, heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne, by the Serbian student Gabrilo Princip on June 28, 1914.

On June 28, 1914 (it was Sunday), the Serbian student, Gabrilo Princip, nineteen years of age, killed at Serajevo, with two shots of a Browning pistol, the Archduke Francis Ferdinand, heir to the Imperial Austro-Hungarian crown, and his wife Sophie, Duchess of Hohenberg neè Countess Chotek of Chotkowa and Wognin.

"A long time ago," said young Princip, "I conceived the idea of killing an Austrian of high rank, to avenge the Serbians of Bosnia for the treatment which they have received from the Austrian government. I had no accomplices. I wished to strike at Austrian Imperialism represented in the person of the Archduke Francis Ferdinand.[1]

[1] Five years after the elevation of Peter I Karageorgevic to the Serbian throne, Austria, celebrating the sixty years of reign of Francis Joseph, annexed to itself Bosnia and Herzegovina, after thirty years of occupation and spoliation, proclaiming it "Royal and Imperial crown land." Thus at the end of 1908 the tension existing since 1878 between Austria and Russia was accentuated. In the rigidity of this tension Germany took an attitude decidedly in favor of her ally, Austria. Emperor William II made the world understand that in the defense of the Austro-Hungarian Empire the shining German sword would always be ready. And Russia finally recognized an annexation that in the Slavic world, and also in Turkey, had provoked protests and anti-Austrian demonstrations; and in Italy, notwithstanding the ties of the Triple Alliance, these conditions had produced a feeling of bitterness.

The tension between Austria and Serbia was such from October 1908, to March 1909, that it was only by a miracle that war had not broken out before between the two countries. But the disproportion between the Austrian and Serbian forces was only too evident; because at the side of Serbia there was no great idealist like Napoleon III, to assist her; had she had this support, she might have waged war in the Balkans against Austria, as Piedmont had done in Italy in 1859. Russia could have done so; but because of the resolute attitude of Germany she made only some technical objection regarding the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina; then Russia declared that her former obligations would not permit her to join in the assault. What was there to do? To Serbia there remained nothing but to bend the head in submission; and she bent it, leaving to Austria, on March 31, 1909, this declaration:

"Serbia recognizes that she has not been deprived of her rights by the conditions

II

The fatal note — *ultimatum* of the Austro-Hungarian government to the government of Serbia (July 23, 1914).

On July 23, 1914, at 6 P. M. the Austrian minister in Belgrade, Baron Giesl von Gieslman, presented the fatal ultimatum note which concluded thus:

In order to give a formal character to this undertaking, the royal Serbian Government shall publish on the front page of its official journal of July 26th the following declaration:

The Royal Government[1] *condemns the propaganda directed against Austria-Hungary, the general tendency of which is to detach from the Austro-Hungarian monarchy territories*[2] *belonging to it, and it sincerely deplores the fatal consequences of these criminal proceedings.*

The Royal Government regrets that Serbian officers and functionaries participated in the above mentioned propaganda and thus compromised the good neighborly relations to which the Royal Government was solemnly pledged by its declaration of March 31, 1909.

The Royal Government, which disapproves of and repudiates all idea of interfering or attempting to interfere with the destinies of the inhabitants of any part whatsoever of Austria-Hungary, considers it its duty formally to warn officers and functionaries and the whole population of the kingdom, that henceforward it will proceed with the utmost rigor against persons who may be guilty of such machinations, and it will use all its efforts to anticipate and suppress such.

created in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and that in consequence she will conform to the decision which the Powers will make in relation to Article XXV, in the treaty of Berlin, July 13, 1878.

"Serbia, submitting to the council of the great Powers, obligates herself from this moment to renounce her attitude of protest and of opposition, which she had adopted last Autumn regarding the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and she obligates herself also to modify the direction of her present policy toward Austria-Hungary, in order to live in the future with the latter on the footing of good neighbors."

This diplomatic obligation did not and could not change the animus of Serbia toward Austria, nor diminish the uneasiness of Austria toward the Serbian people and the Montenegrins, considered at Vienna and at Budapest the advance guards of the Pan-Slavic movement of which Russia always was the inspirer and patroness.

[1] The Royal Government is the Government of Serbia.

[2] Bosnia and Herzegovina.

This declaration shall simultaneously be communicated to the royal army as an order of the day by His Majesty the King and shall be published in the *official bulletin* of the army.

The royal Serbian Government further undertakes:

1. To suppress any publication which incites to hatred and contempt of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy and the general tendency of which is directed against its territorial integrity.

2. To dissolve immediately the society styled *Narodna Obdrana*, to confiscate all its means of propaganda, and to proceed in the same manner against other societies and their branches in Serbia which engage in propaganda against the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. The Royal Government shall take the necessary measures to prevent the societies dissolved from continuing their activity under another name and form.

3. To eliminate without delay from public instruction in Serbia, both as regards the teaching body and also as regards the methods of instruction, everything that serves, or might serve, to foment the propaganda against Austria-Hungary.

4. To remove from the military service, and from the administration in general, all officers and functionaries guilty of propaganda against the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, whose names and deeds the Austro-Hungarian Government reserves to itself the right of communicating to the Royal Government:

5. To accept the collaboration in Serbia of representatives of the Austro-Hungarian Government in the suppression of the subversive movement directed against the territorial integrity of the monarchy.

6. To take judicial proceedings against accessories to the plot of June 28th, who are on Serbian territory. Delegates of the Austro-Hungarian Government will take part in the investigation relating thereto.

7. To proceed without delay to the arrest of Commandant Voina Tankosic and of the individual named Milan Ciganovitch, a Serbian state employee, who have been compromised by the results of the magisterial inquiry at Serajevo.

8. To prevent by effective measures the co-operation of the Serbian authorities in the illicit traffic in arms and explosives across the frontier, to dismiss and punish severely the officials of the frontier service at Schabatz and Loznica guilty of having assisted the perpetrators of the Serajevo crime by facilitating their passage across the frontier.

9. To furnish the Imperial and Royal Government with

explanations regarding the unjustifiable utterances of high Serbian officials, both in Serbia and abroad, who, notwithstanding their official positions, did not hesitate after the crime of June 28th to express themselves in interviews in terms of hostility to the Austro-Hungarian government, and, finally,

10. To notify the Imperial and Royal Government without delay of the execution of the measures comprised under the preceding heads.

The Austro-Hungarian Government expects the reply of the royal government at the latest by 6 o'clock on Saturday evening, July 25th.

The Russian minister, Strandtman, in Belgrade, immediately sent a despatch to the minister of foreign affairs, Sazonoff, at Petrograd, as follows:

The minister of Austria has just at this moment, six P. M., handed to the Serbian minister of finance, Patchou, who has replaced Pasic, an *ultimatum note* from his government, fixing forty-eight hours as the limit of time for the acceptance of the demand which is contained therein. Giesl has declared verbally that if the note is not accepted in its entirety within the forty-eight hours, he has received orders to leave Belgrade, together with the other officials of the legation. Pasic and the other ministers, who are in an electoral campaign, have been recalled, and are expected at Belgrade tomorrow morning, Friday, at 10 o'clock. Patchou, who communicated to me the contents of the note, solicits the aid of Russia, and declares that no government could accept the demands of Austria.

The morning of July 24, 1914, the Austro-Hungarian ambassadors in Germany, England, Russia, France, Italy, and Turkey communicated to the Governments of these Powers the text of the *ultimatum note* directed by the Imperial Government of Francis Joseph to Serbia the morning of the preceding day (July 23, 1914).

III

The partisan attitude of Germany. The conciliatory attitude of Russia. The beseeching telegram of Prince Alexander, regent of Serbia, to Czar Nicholas II. An eloquent telegram from the English Ambassador, Buchanan. The obstinacy of the Austro-Hungarian Government.

The gravity of the ultimatum note sent from Vienna to Belgrade was felt throughout the world; the German attitude was expressed on the same date —July 24, 1914—in various German newspapers and particularly in the *Kreuz Zeitung*, organ of the minister of foreign affairs in Berlin.

It is to be hoped," said the journal, "if the dissension precipitates a war, that this war will be isolated. The spark may kindle a barrel of powder in Europe; but up to this moment we can and we must hope that the great Powers will recognize the justice of the Austro-Hungarian demands, and that no one will give aid to Serbia.

This same idea clinched and amplified another *officious* communication from Berlin, affirming that it was inconceivable, "that there could be any Power disposed to lend moral or material aid to the Serbians in questions like this which necessarily must re-awaken the sentiment of the monarchial solidarity between nations honestly bound together. Serbia therefore"—concludes this officious voice —"will accept the Austrian demands or it *will perish*."

The *Lokal Anzeiger*, of the same date, said:

Germany feels much relieved because finally the time has arrived to clarify definitely the Balkan situation, and she congratulates herself along with the allied Empire for its virile resolution, and assures it fidelity and unconditional aid in the difficult days before it.

This was not only the sentiment of the German Government circles, of which the *Lokal Anzeiger* was also the officious organ, but also the sentiment of the German people

as was shown by the unanimity of their organs, and by the enthusiastic popular demonstrations made in the great German cities, from Berlin to Munich. They were not in accord in their prevision (pacific solution or war), but all were in accord in saying that "in any case Germany will be at the side of Austria!"

However, the Russian minister of foreign affairs, Sazonoff, as soon as he was informed of the step which Austria had taken at Belgrade, and as soon as he received from the Russian minister at Belgrade the demand for aid in favor of Serbia, transmitted to the Austrian Government at Vienna on July 24th, the following declaration, by means of the Russian Ambassador Knidachew:

The communication made by Austria to the powers at Belgrade on the following day, on the presentation of the *ultimatum*, is quite insufficient to enable them to take any steps which might help to smooth away the difficulties that have arisen.

In order to prevent the incalculable consequences, equally fatal to all the powers which may result from the course of action followed by the Austrian Government, it seems to us to be, above all, essential that the period of time allowed for the Serbian reply should be extended. Austria-Hungary, having declared her readiness to inform the powers of the result of the inquiry upon which the Imperial and Royal Governments base their accusations, should also allow them equally sufficient time to weigh them.[1] In this case if the powers should be convinced that certain of the Austrian demands were well founded, they would be in a position to offer advice to the Serbian Government. A refusal to prolong the terms of the ultimatum would render nugatory the proposals made by the Austrian Government to the powers, and would be in contradiction to the very basis of international relations.

While Russia took this step at Vienna — recommending it simultaneously to the attention of the Governments of London, Berlin, Paris and Rome — Prince Alexander, regent of Serbia, sent to Czar Nicholas II the following telegram:

The Austrian Government last evening sent to the Serbian

[1] From the inquiry instituted by the Austrian agents in Serajevo, it was proven that the assassination of the hereditary Archduke, Francis Ferdinand, was the result of a plot in which the army and the government functionaries of Serbia took part.

Government a note concerning the assault at Serajevo. Conscious of her international duties, Serbia, from the first day of the horrible crime, declared that she condemned it and that she was ready to open an inquiry on her own territory if the complicity of certain of her subjects should be proved in the course of the trial begun by the Austrian authorities. In consequence the demands contained in the Austrian note are uselessly humiliating to Serbia, and incompatible with her dignity as an independent state. A space of forty-eight hours has been granted to us to accept everything; if we do not accept, the Austrian Legation will leave Belgrade. We are ready to accept the Austrian conditions in so far as they are compatible with the situation of an independent state, as also the conditions which were advised by Your Majesty; everyone whose participation in the crime of Serajevo is proved will be severely punished by us.

Some of the Austrian demands can not be executed without changes in our legislation, and this requires time. Too brief a space of time for this has been granted us. We can be attacked by the Austrian army, which is concentrating on our frontier, as soon as the forty-eight hours have passed. It is impossible for us to defend ourselves, and we supplicate Your Majesty to give us your aid as soon as possible.

The valued benevolence of Your Majesty, manifested so many times toward us, makes us confidently hope that this time also our appeal will be heard by your generous Slavic heart.

In these difficult moments I interpret the sentiments of the Serbian people, who supplicate Your Majesty to graciously interest yourself in the cause of the Kingdom of Serbia.

Besides this, the English Ambassador, Buchanan, at Petrograd, on July 25, 1914, informed Sir Edward Grey at London that Russia favored an appeal from Serbia to the Powers.

The Russian minister of foreign affairs, Sazonoff [thus said Buchanan in his telegram to Grey] wished to see the question placed upon an international basis, because the obligations assumed by Serbia in 1909, to which allusion is made in the Austrian ultimatum, were given, not to Austria, but to the Powers. If Serbia would appeal to the Powers, Russia would be disposed to keep herself out and leave the matter in the hands of England, France, Germany and Italy.

But on the afternoon of July 25, 1914, Baron de Macchio,

who replaced the Austrian minister of foreign affairs, Count Berchtold, in his absence from the capital, communicated to the Russian Ambassador in Vienna that the Austrian Government would not consent to accept the demand of Russia to prolong the time given to Serbia, maintaining, "that the solution of the incident with Serbia is a matter which interests exclusively Austria and Serbia. Austria therefore has decided, in whatever circumstances, to refuse every attempt at intervention by outsiders."

IV

The reply of the Serbian Government to the *ultimatum* note of the Austro-Hungarian Government was given July 25, 1914.

The forty-eight hours, exactly the same length of time which Austria, in April 1859, accorded to Piedmont, were about over. Twenty minutes before, that is, at 5:40 P. M., of July 25th, the Serbian prime minister Pasic handed to Baron Giesl, the Austro-Hungarian minister, the following reply:

The royal Serbian Government has received the communication of the imperial and royal government of July 23, 1914, and is convinced that its reply will remove any misunderstanding which may threaten to impair the good neighborly relations between the Austro-Hungarian monarchy and the Kingdom of Serbia.

Conscious of the fact that the protests which were made both from the tribune of the national Skupshtina and in the declarations and actions of the responsible representatives of the state — protests which were cut short by the declaration made by the Serbian Government on March 18, 1909 — have not been renewed on any occasion as regards the great neighboring monarchy, and that no attempt has been made since that time, either by the successive royal governments or by their organs, to change the political and legal state of affairs created in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the royal government draws attention to the fact that in this connection the imperial and royal government has made no representation ex-

cept one concerning a school book, and on that occasion the imperial and royal government received an entirely satisfactory explanation. Serbia has several times given proofs of her pacific and moderate policy during the Balkan crisis, and thanks to Serbia and to the sacrifice that she has made in the exclusive interest of European peace, that peace has been preserved. The Royal Government cannot be held responsible for manifestations of a private character, such as articles in the press and the peaceable work of societies — manifestations which take place in nearly all countries in the ordinary course of events, and which as a general rule escape official control. The Royal Government cannot be made responsible in view of the fact that at the time of the solution of a series of questions which arose between Serbia and Austria-Hungary, it gave proof of a great readiness to oblige, and thus succeeded in settling the majority of these questions to the advantage of the two neighboring countries.

For these reasons the Royal Government has been pained and surprised at the statements made that persons of the Kingdom of Serbia are supposed to have participated in the preparations for the crime committed at Serajevo; the Royal Government expected to be invited to collaborate in an investigation of all that concerns this crime, and it is ready, in order to prove the entire correctness of its attitude, to take measures against any persons concerning whom representations may be made to them. Falling in, therefore, with the desire of the Imperial and Royal Government, it is prepared to hand over for trial any Serbian subject, without regard to his position or rank, of whose complicity in the crime of Serajevo proofs may be furnished, and more especially they will undertake to cause to be published on the first page of the *Official Army Bulletin*, on the dates from July 13th to the 26th, the following declaration:

The Royal Government of Serbia condemns all propaganda which may be directed against Austria-Hungary, that is to say, all such tendencies as aim at ultimately detaching from the Austrian monarchy territories which form part thereof, and it sincerely deplores the baneful consequences of these criminal movements. The Royal Government regrets that, according to the communication from the Imperial and Royal Government, certain Serbian officers and officials should have taken part in the above-mentioned propaganda, and thus compromise the good neighborly relations to which the royal Serbian Government was solemnly engaged by the declaration of March 31, 1909, which declaration disapproves of and repudiates

all idea or attempt at interference with the destiny of the inhabitants of any part whatsoever of Austria-Hungary, and it considers it a duty formally to warn the officers, officials, and entire population of the kingdom that henceforth it will take the most rigorous steps against all such persons as are guilty of such acts and to prevent and to repress such it will use its utmost endeavor.

This declaration will be brought to the knowledge of the royal army in an order of the day, in the name of his Majesty the King, by his royal highness the Crown Prince Alexander, and will be published in the next *official army bulletin.*

The Royal Government further undertakes:

1. To introduce at the first regular convocation of the Skupshtina a provision into the law governing the press and providing for the most severe punishment of incitement to hatred or contempt of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, and for taking action against any publication, the general tendency of which is directed against the territorial integrity of Austria-Hungary. The Government assumes the responsibility at the coming revision of the constitution, of causing an amendment to be introduced into article 22 of the constitution of such a nature that any publication may be suppressed, a proceeding at present impossible under the categorical terms of article 22 of the constitution.

2. The Government possesses no proof, nor does the note of the Imperial and Royal Government furnish it with any, that the *Narodna Obdrana* and other similar societies have committed, up to the present, any criminal act of this nature through the proceedings of any of their members. Nevertheless, the Royal Government will accept the demand of the Imperial and Royal Government and will dissolve the *Narodna Obdrana* society and any other society which may be directing its efforts against Austria.

3. The Royal Serbian Government undertakes to remove without delay from their public educational establishments in Serbia all that serves or could serve to foment propaganda against Austria, whenever the Imperial and Royal Government furnishes them with facts and proofs of this propaganda.

4. The Royal Government also agrees to remove from military service all such persons as the judicial inquiry may have proved to be guilty of acts directed against the integrity of the territory of the Austrian monarchy, and it expects the Imperial and Royal Government to communicate to them at a later date the names and

the acts of these officers and officials for the purposes of the proceedings which are to be taken against them.

5. The Royal Government must confess that it does not clearly grasp the meaning or the scope of the demand made by the Imperial and Royal Government that Serbia shall undertake to accept the collaboration of the organs of the Imperial and Royal Government upon their territory, but it declares that it will admit such collaboration as agrees with the principle of international law, with criminal procedure, and with good neighborly relations.

6. It goes without saying that the Royal Government considers it its duty to open an inquiry against all such persons as are, or eventually may be, implicated in the plot of June 28, 1914, and who happen to be within the territory of the kingdom. As regards the participation in this inquiry of Austrian agents or authorities appointed for this purpose by the Imperial and Royal Government, the Royal Government cannot accept such an arrangement, as it would be a violation of the constitution and of the law of criminal procedure; nevertheless, in concrete cases communications as to the results of the investigation in question might be given to the Austro-Hungarian agents.

7. The Royal Government proceeded, on the very evening of the delivery of the note, to arrest Commandant Voina Tankosic. As regards Milan Ciganovitch, who is a subject of the Austrian monarchy, and who up to June 15th was employed (on probation) by the directorate of railways, it has not yet been possible to arrest him.

The Austrian Government is requested to be so good as to supply as soon as possible, in the customary form, the presumptive evidence of guilt, as well as the eventual proofs of guilt which have been collected up to the present time at the inquiry at Serajevo, for the purposes of the latter inquiry.

8. The Serbian Government will reinforce and extend the measures which have been taken for preventing the illicit traffic in arms and explosives across the frontier. It goes without saying that they will immediately order an inquiry and will severely punish the frontier officials on the Schabatz-Loxnitza line who have failed in their duty and allowed the authors of the crime of Serajevo to pass.

9. The Royal Government will gladly give explanations of the remarks made by their officials, whether in Serbia or abroad, in interviews after the crime, and which, according to the state-

ment of the Imperial and Royal Government, were hostile toward the monarchy, as soon as the imperial and royal government has communicated to them the passages in question in these remarks, and as soon as they have shown that the remarks were actually made by the said officials, and the Royal Government will itself take steps to collect evidence and proofs.

10. The Royal Government of Serbia will inform the imperial and Royal Government of the execution of the measures comprised under the above heads, in so far as this has not already been done by the present note, as soon as each measure has been ordered and carried out.

If the Imperial and Royal Government is not satisfied with this reply, the Serbian Government, considering that it is not to the common interest to precipitate the solution of this question, is ready, as always, to accept a pacific understanding, either by referring these questions to the decision of the international tribunal of The Hague, or to the great powers which took part in the drawing up of the declaration made by the Serbian Government on March 31, 1909.

The telegram announcing the above note by Pasic to the Austro-Hungarian minister was published as information in the official correspondence bureau of Vienna (July 25, 1914) with the following words:

The Serbian Prime Minister Pasic, before six P. M., went to the Austrian Legation at Belgrade and gave an insufficient response to the Austro-Hungarian note.

The Minister, Baron Giesl, then notified Pasic of the rupture of diplomatic relations and left Belgrade with other officers of the legation at 6:30 P. M.

V

An eloquent telegram from the English ambassador in Vienna, Maurice di Bunsen, to Sir Edward Grey (July 27, 1914). An official communication from the Russian Government, published by the Courrier de la Bourse, of Petrograd (July 27, 1914), the reply of Czar Nicholas II to Prince Alexander, regent of Serbia (July 27, 1914). The grateful acknowledgment of Prince Alexander to Czar Nicholas II.

On July 27, 1914, the English ambassador at Vienna, Maurice di Bunsen, sent the following telegram to Sir Edward Grey in London:

I have had conversations with all of my colleagues representing the great powers. The impression which was left on my mind is that the Austro-Hungarian note was so drawn up as to render a war inevitable; that the Austro-Hungarian Government has fully determined to have war with Serbia; that it considers its position as one of the great powers in jeopardy, and that until punishment has been administered to Serbia, it is unlikely that it will listen to proposals of mediation. This country (Austro-Hungary) has gone wild with joy at the prospect of war with Serbia, and its postponement of prevention would undoubtedly be a great disappointment.

The Courrier de la Bourse of Petrograd on July 27, 1914, published the following official communication:

Russia will be ready to respond by any means which are at the disposal of a great power before any evidence in which it is proved that its legitimate demands are despised. Russia will not permit the annihilation of a Slavic State, but it is as ready to sustain Austro-Hungary in its just demands as it is ready to recommend to Serbia not to be unreasonable. In any case Russia will never permit the punishment of an entire Serbian people for the crime of a private individual. Neither Russia nor Serbia can consent to interference with the sovereign right of a Balkan State.

And Czar Nicholas II on the same day responded to the

supplicating telegram sent to him by Prince Alexander, Regent of Serbia, on July 24th. The Czar, in his response, made known his wishes and recommendations and expressed his approbation of the attempt to avert war; but concluded thus: "If, notwithstanding our most sincere desires, we cannot prevent war, your highness may rest assured that in any case Russia will be interested in the fate of Serbia."

When the Russian minister in Serbia, Strandtman, consigned to the Prime Minister of Serbia the comforting telegram of the Czar directed to Prince Alexander, Pasic, after having read it, made the sign of the cross and exclaimed, "O God! The Czar is great and merciful!" Then not being able to restrain his emotion he embraced Strandtman; and Prince Alexander telegraphed his thanks to the Czar, in these terms:

Profoundly touched by the telegram Your Majesty has deigned to send me, I hasten to thank you from my heart. I pray Your Majesty to be persuaded that the cordial sympathy which Your Majesty has shown toward our country is especially precious and fills our hearts with hope that the future of Serbia is assured since this nation has become the object of your high solicitude. These dark moments cement more than ever the chains of deep attachment which unites Serbia with "Santa Russia Slava"; the sentiments of eternal gratitude for the protection and aid of your Majesty shall be held devoutly in the soul of every Serbian.

VI

The declaration of war by Austria-Hungary against Serbia (July 27, 1914). The proclamation of the Emperor Francis Joseph to his people (July 28th). Czar Nicholas sends an urgent telegram to the Kaiser, begging of him to discourage war (July 29th). The reply and the declaration of war (July 31st).

The inflexible plan of the Austro-Hungarian government was announced on July 27, 1914, with the following declaration made to the powers:

To put an end to the subversive plots coming from Belgrade and directed against the territorial integrity of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, the imperial and Royal Government, warned the Royal Government of Serbia July 23, 1914, by means of a note, in which we find formulated a series of demands for the acceptance of which there was accorded forty-eight hours.

The Royal Government of Serbia not having responded to this note in a satisfactory manner, the Imperial Royal Government of Austria found it necessary to provide, with force of arms, for the defense of its rights and interests.

Austria, which had simultaneously directed a formal declaration to Serbia, in conformity to Article I of the Convention of October 18, 1907, relative to the opening of hostilities, considers itself, from this moment in a state of war with Serbia.

The day after, July 28th, the Emperor Francis Joseph published from Vienna a proclamation, in which among things he said to his people:

My greatest desire has always been to consecrate the years, which by 'grace of God remain to me, to the work of peace, and to preserve my people from the great sacrifice and burdens of war. But Providence has willed otherwise. The conduct of an adversary full of hate obliges me to defend the honor of my monarchy; to protect its authority and its power; to guarantee its position; to take the sword in hand after long years of peace.

My Government has made, in vain, a last attempt to obtain by pacific means its ambition to induce Serbia to change its course of conduct; but Serbia has rejected the moderate overtures of my government and has refused to do its duty. I see myself constrained to create by force, the indispensable guarantees which must secure to my State internal calm and permanent peace with the outside world.

I, in this grave hour, assume all of the burden of my decision and the responsibility which I may encounter before Omnipotent God. I have examined and studied everything. I pledge myself conscientiously to the way which duty points out to me. I have faith in my people, who during so many storms have always united themselves around my throne; I have faith in the Austro-Hungarian army, which is animated by sentiments of valor and devotion. I have faith in Omnipotent God, who will give victory to my armies.

On July 29th, Czar Nicholas II telegraphed to Kaiser William II thus:

In this grave moment I beg of you to assist me. A cowardly war has been declared against a weak nation. In Russia the indignation, which I myself share, is enormous. I foresee that I cannot long resist the pressure forced upon me and I shall be constrained to take such measures as may lead to a European war. I beg of you, in the name of our old friendship, to do all that is possible to prevent your ally continuing.

But William II responded by insisting that Austria had acted justly; that the conflict must be limited to Austria and Serbia; but in any case Germany would be with her ally Austria.

Events became more serious and continued to go rapidly from bad to worse.

On the afternoon of July 31st, Kaiser William II was obliged, by the insistent cheers of an immense crowd, to present himself on the balcony of the Imperial Palace in Berlin with the Empress at his side, together with the Crown Prince and his consort, the Chancellor, and the principal personages of the court. On this occasion he pronounced these words:

A critical hour has fallen upon Germany. From every part we are constrained, much to my grief, to take arms in just defense.

If at the last hour our efforts cannot induce our adversaries to repent and maintain peace, for which for twenty-five years I have worked, I hope that we, with the help of God, will unsheath the sword, and I hope we shall sheath it again with honor. You must be willing to endure enormous sacrifices of blood and of goods, but you will endure this, I know, and to our adversaries we will show what it means to offend Germany.

I commend you to God! Go to church and pray to God to grant victory to the German arms and cause.

On August 1, 1914, Germany declared war on Russia. On August 3d, Germany declared war upon France and on the same date (August 3d) Germany declared war on Belgium.

VII

The treaty of the Triple Alliance between the Governments of Italy, Austria, and Germany (1882–1912). The articles III, IV, and VII of that same treaty.

When, in September, 1877, Francesco Crispi — who as yet had not risen to power in the Government of Italy — met Prince Bismarck at Wildbad and spoke of a possible defensive alliance between Germany and Italy, and touched on the complicated Oriental question, Bismarck responded: "If Austria should take Bosnia, Italy would take Albania, or any other Turkish land on the Adriatic." One year after (1878) Austria, following the congress of Berlin, "took" Bosnia; but Italy did not "take" Albania.

Instead, on October 31, 1881, Humbert I accompanied by Queen Margherita, Minister Depretis, and Mancini, visited Francis Joseph at Vienna, for important political reasons. And on May 20, 1882, the Italian, Austrian and German Governments signed the famous treaty of the Triple Alliance which was afterward renewed in 1887, 1897, and 1902, and finally in 1912 for another twelve years.

After the treaty was signed on May 20, 1882, Prince Bismarck, in a speech in the German parliament on June 12, 1882, expressed himself thus: "We are united and allied, gentlemen, with two great monarchies, Italy and Austria, who will defend our interests and who want peace as we want it."

From the documents published after the war broke out, it clearly followed that the treaty of the Triple Alliance — renewed, as has been said, in 1912, for another twelve years— contained among other things, three articles (3, 4, and 7).

Such articles were of the following tenor:

Article III. If one or two of the contracting parties, without provocation on their part, are attacked by two or more Powers which have not signed this treaty, and are implicated in a war with them, this will at the same time raise the *casus foederis* for the other parties.

Article IV. If a great Power which has not signed this treaty menaces the national safety of one of the contracting parties and the nation thus menaced were thus constrained to declare war, the other two would be obliged to observe toward their ally a benevolent neutrality. Each one of the three contracting Powers in this case, will remain free to participate in the war if it seems wise and to make a common cause with her ally.

Article VII. Austria-Hungary and Italy, which have only the object in view to maintain the *status quo* in the Orient, obligate themselves to use their influence to prevent any territorial change dangerous to one or the other of the contracting Powers. They will reciprocally give all the explanations necessary to clarify their respective intentions and the intentions of the other Powers.

But if, however, in the course of events a case presents in itself which it would be impossible to maintain the *status quo* in the territory of the Balkans, and of the Ottoman coasts and islands of the Adriatic and Aegean Seas; and in consequence of the conduct of a third Power, or for other causes, Austria and Italy would be obliged to change the *status quo* with a temporary or lasting occupation, such occupation would take place only after previous agreement between the two Powers, based on the principle of a reciprocal consent [1] for all territorial or other sorts of advantages which could come to one of them outside of the present *status quo* and in a manner to satisfy the justifiable pretentions of both parties.

VIII

How the Government of Austria, in its fatal *ultimatum* of July 23, 1914, and the consequent declaration of war against Serbia, of July 27, 1914, violated the treaty of the Triple Alliance to the injury of Italy.

The *Giornale d'Italia* (the great official daily of Rome) August 1, 1914, published the following:

During the grave crisis provoked by the note of Austria to Serbia, the Italian government worked actively and in conjunction especially with the English Government, to avoid European complications and to maintain peace. But unfortunately the

[1] Some publications say: "based on the principle of reciprocal compensation."

Italo-English efforts for peace did not succeed; and from day to day the probabilities of an European conflagration became greater. Thus the Italian Government had to consider the situation in which (the Government) Italy might find herself in a future conflict, and place herself in accord in the following points:

First. The note of Austria to Serbia was communicated to the Italian government after it had been communicated to the Serbian government, so that there was no advice beforehand on the part of the Chancellery of Vienna, nor any treaty with the Roman cabinet regarding the grave decision which immediately had European consequences.

Second. One of the fundamental characteristics of the Triple Alliance is that no one of the allies can undertake an action in the Balkans without first being in accord with the other allies. Now there was no such preventive agreement between Austria and Italy.

Third. The Triple Alliance has a defensive, not an offensive character, and cannot obligate the allies to follow one of them, who, on its own account and without previous advice, would have the object in view of pursuing an aggressive action exactly such as that undertaken by Austria against Serbia.

Fourth. The fundamental interest of Italy is, that the Adriatic-Balkanic equilibrium, resulting from the recent wars in the European East, shall not be disturbed, but instead, the principle must continue to prevail that the Balkans must be for the Balkan people. Now, the military action of Austro-Hungary against Serbia — notwithstanding the Chancellery of Vienna had declared that it had no territorial ambitions — is of such a nature that a change may be precipitated in the aforesaid equilibrium.

Fifth. Italy, not having been advised in advance of the thing which Austria was undertaking, could not even take one of the necessary precautions for the protection of her most vital interests in the eventuality of unforeseen European complications. On these substantial points, the council of the ministers of Italy (meeting August 1, 1914) found themselves in accord. On the other hand the Italian Government did not fail to make known its point of view to the governments of Vienna and Berlin, assuring them that in any case Italy would have held an amicable attitude toward the allies. But they observed in the meantime that the sudden and not concerted action of Austria against Serbia could not impose on them the obligation to follow Austria everywhere, and that the object of Italy was essentially pacific.

On the evening of August 2d, the *Giornale d'Italia* published the following:

This morning, a little before noon, the German ambassador in Rome, Baron von Flotow, visited our minister of foreign affairs, and communicated to him that Germany had declared war on Russia. The minister, the Marquis of San Giuliano, received the communication and declared that Italy, inspired by the spirit and the letter of the treaty of the Triple Alliance, does not believe that the actual conflict as it has risen and developed, can constitute the *casus foederis* for the participation of Italy in this conflict; therefore the Honorable San Giuliano added that Italy will maintain the most rigorous neutrality.

IX

The declaration of Italian neutrality (August 4, 1914).

On August 4, 1914, the official gazette of the kingdom of Italy published the following:

The Italian cabinet has deliberated upon the following text of a declaration of neutrality:

Finding some of the Powers of Europe in a state of war, and Italy being in a state of peace with all belligerents, the government of the King, citizens, and other subjects of the kingdom, are obliged to observe the duties of neutrality following the existing laws and following the principle of international rights.

Whoever violates these duties must suffer the consequences, and will incur the punishments established by law.

Such proclamation of neutrality was unanimously approved by a great majority of the nation represented by the Socialists, Republicans, Radicals, Democrats, Progressives and by many of the Liberal Constitutional party; on one side, for pacific and theoretic reasons of principle; on the other, for party reasons, and for historical and sentimental reasons, and on account of Masonic opposition to Catholic Austria, against German militarism, in fact, against the Triple Alliance; and also because of the fear of financial and economic conditions which seemed very delicate for the

state and for the country — as was shown by the recent parliamentary discussions — after the campaign with Lybia, which brought to the national treasury a burden of no less than one billion of lire to face, together with new taxes which were exasperating additions to the old; there were citizens of every sort who for one reason or another were not of any party, not representative, non-agitators, because they were opposed in general to the war, to the adventurous undertaking and because they were desirous that Italy, in the general interests of the nation, should have a long period of peace and fruitful work.

The proclamation of neutrality was disapproved and combated by a small minority of the Italians who wanted immediate intervention at the side of Germany and Austria, and also by those who stood by the Triplè Alliance at any cost (Moderate Liberals, Conservatives and some of the Young Nationalists) and who were convinced of the moral necessity for Italy to face in Europe, for her present and for her future place in the world among the nations, the cementation of war and the necessary risks borne by it; and to acquire from her natural boundaries from every part greater and natural expansion on the surrounding seas.

X

The Italian Government, on May 3, 1915, denounces the treaty of the Triple Alliance.

If the majority of the nation was in favor of neutrality in 1914, in 1915 it was in favor of war. On May 3, 1915, Baron Sydney Sonnino, minister of foreign affairs in Italy, presented the following note to the minister of foreign affairs of Austro-Hungary through the Duke of Avarna, Ambassador of Victor Emanuel III at Vienna:

The alliance between Italy and Austria-Hungary became stronger, from its very beginning, as an element and a guarantee of peace, and aimed chiefly, at first, toward the end of mutual defense. Considering the ulterior events and the new situation which resulted

from them, the governments of both countries were forced to consider another, and no less essential aim in the course of the successive renewals of the treaty, and thus applied themselves to safeguard the continuance of their alliance, stipulating the principle of previous understandings relative to the Balkans, in view of conciliating the interests and divergent tendencies of the two powers.

It is very evident that these stipulations, loyally observed, would have been sufficient to furnish a solid basis for a mutual and fecund action. Instead, Austria-Hungary, during the summer of 1914, without consulting Italy, without even giving her the least notice, and taking no cognizance of the advices of moderation which were given to her by the Royal Government, sent Serbia the *ultimatum* of July 23, 1914, which was the cause and the starting point of the present European conflagration.

Austria-Hungary, in neglecting the obligations arising from the treaty, profoundly disturbed the *status quo* of the Balkan States, and created a situation by which she alone was to profit, to the detriment of the interests of the greatest importance, that her ally had so many times affirmed and proclaimed.

So flagrant a violation of the letter and the spirit of the treaty, not alone justified the refusal by Italy to take sides with the allies in a war provoked without her consent, but took away at the same time from the allies their most essential content and *raison d'être.*

The condition itself, of the benevolent neutrality provided for by the treaty, was compromised by this violation. Reason and sentiment are agreed, in fact, to exclude the idea that benevolent neutrality could be maintained when one of the allies takes up arms for the realization of a program diametrically opposed to the vital interests of the other ally; interests, the safeguarding of which constitutes the principal reason for the alliance itself.

In spite of these facts Italy has endeavored, during several months, to create a situation favorable to the re-establishment between the two states of such amicable relations as constitute the fundamental principles of all co-operation in the domain of general politics.

With this end in view, and with this hope, the Royal Government declared itself disposed to agree to an arrangement having as a base the satisfaction in an equitable measure of the legitimate national aspirations of Italy, and which would serve at the same time to reduce the existing disparities in the reciprocal situations

of both states on the Adriatic. These negotiations, however, brought no appreciable results.

All efforts of the Royal Government were frustrated by the resistance of the Imperial and Royal Government, which, after several months, only decided to admit of the special interests of Italy in Valona, and to promise an insufficient concession of territory in the Trentino, a concession which did not achieve the normal adjustment of the situation, either from a political or a military point of view. This concession, besides, was to have its execution only at an indeterminate date, that is to say, only at the end of the war.

In view of this state of affairs, the Italian Government must give up the hope of reaching an understanding, and sees itself forced to retire from all propositions of arrangement.

It is equally useless to maintain toward the alliance a formal appearance which belies the reality of continual distrust and daily disputes.

That is why, Italy, confident in her right, affirms and proclaims that it takes back, from this instant, its entire liberty of action and declares annulled and forever without effect, its treaty alliance with Austria-Hungary.

SONNINO.

XI

Antonio Salandra, president of the ministerial council of Italy, in the historical session of the National Italian Parliament in Rome, May 20, 1915, explains the reasons which forced the Italian Government to declare war on Austria-Hungary.

On May 20, 1915, in the historical session of the National Parliament at Rome, Antonio Salandra, president of the ministerial council of Italy, presented a sketch of laws, "for the conferring of extraordinary powers on the Government of the King in case of war," and made the following address:

Honorable Colleagues: Italy from the time in which she rose to the unity of State, asserted herself in the world of nations as a factor of moderation, concord and peace; and she can proudly proclaim to have fulfilled such a mission with a firmness which did not make her shrink even before the most painful sacrifices.

For more than thirty years, she has maintained a system of alliance and of friendship, dominated principally by the desire to better assure, in such a way, the European equilibrium, and with it, peace. For the nobility of such an end, Italy has not only tolerated the insecurity of her frontiers, not only has she subordinated to this end her most sacred national aspiration, but she has been forced to assist, with repressed sorrow, in the attempts methodically conducted to suppress those characteristics of Italianity which nature and history have indelibly impressed on generous regions.

The *ultimatum* that the Austro-Hungarian Empire directed to Serbia in July 1914, at one blow annulled the effects of our long efforts, violating the pact which tied us to that state. Austria violated the aforesaid pact, by omitting the agreement with us, and by not even having sent a simple notice to us. She violated it in substance, thus intending to disturb, to our injury, the delicate system of territorial possession and of spheres of influence which had been formed in the Balkan peninsula.

But, to speak of more than this or that particular point, the whole spirit of the treaty was offended even more than it was suppressed; because it unleashed in the world this most terrible war contrary to our sentiments and to our interests. And the equilibrium, which the alliance might have secured, was destroyed; and virtually but irresistibly, the problem of the national integration of Italy arose, notwithstanding that for many months, the government has patiently labored to effect a compromise which might restore to the treaty its right to exist, which it has lost. But the treaties necessary to effect such a compromise should have had limitations not only of time but of prestige without which the interest of our country would have been compromised.

For the guardianship, therefore, of these treaties the government of the kingdom of Italy found itself constrained to notify the imperial Austrian Government on the fourth of this month, May, 1915, that it must withdraw all of its proposals of agreement, denounce the treaty of the alliance, and declare its own liberty of action. Nor, on the other hand, was it more possible to leave Italy in isolation without security and without prestige, just at the moment in which the history of the world was taking on a decisive phase.

Now in the name of the Patria and because of our devotion to her, we fervently make our most earnest appeal to Parliament and to the country that all dissensions stop, and, more than this, in every part they must be forgotten.

The disputes between parties and classes, individual opinions — always respected in normal times — in other words, the reasons themselves, which give life to the daily fecund contrast of tendencies and principles, must today disappear before an ideality which inflames more than any other ideality the fortunes and greatness of Italy.

Everything else we must forget from this moment, and remember only this: to be *Italians*, to love all Italy with the same faith and fervor. The forces of all must be cemented into one single heart; only one single will must guide all toward the wished for end; and force, and art, and will must find their expression one, alive, and heroic in the army and navy of Italy and in the august leader who conducts them toward the destiny of the new history.

XII

Italy declares war against Austria-Hungary (May 23, 1915).

On May 23, 1915, the Government of Victor Emanuel III, incited by the great majority (nine-tenths of the Italian people), declared war on the Austro-Hungarian Empire through the following communication by the duke of Avarna, the Italian Ambassador to the Austrian Government at Vienna:

Vienna, May 23, 1915.

Following the instructions that I have received from His Majesty the King, my august sovereign, I, the undersigned, have the honor to communicate to his excellency, minister of foreign affairs of Austro-Hungary, the following declaration:

As has already been noted, on May 4, 1915, there was communicated to the Imperial Royal Government the motives for which Italy, confident of her rights, considered the treaty of the alliance which had been violated by the Imperial Royal Government, and declared it null and without effect in the future, and she assumed her former liberty of action.

The Government of the King, firmly determined to assure with every means at its disposal the defense of Italian rights and interests, will not neglect its duty to undertake, in the face of any present and future threats, the measures which may be imposed for the accomplishment of its national aspirations.

His Majesty the King declares that Italy from tomorrow must be considered in a state of war with Austria-Hungary (May 24, 1915).

I, the undersigned, have the honor to communicate at the same time to his excellency, the minister of foreign affairs of Austro-Hungary, that the passports will be handed today to the Imperial Royal Ambassador at Rome. I shall be gratified if mine may also be handed to me.

DUKE OF AVARNA.

XIII

The Emperor Francis Joseph in a proclamation addressed to his people on May 24, 1915, accuses Victor Emanuel III, King of Italy, of treachery.

The day after (May 24, 1915) Francis Joseph published the following proclamation:

To my People!

The King of Italy has declared war. History does not record such betrayal as this which has been accomplished by the King of Italy against his two allies. After an alliance of more than thirty years, during which time Italy has been able to increase her territory and develop her resources, she has left us and goes forth with her flag floating in the field of the enemy.

We have not threatened Italy, we have not lessened her prestige; we have not hurt her goods nor her interests; we have always observed our duty toward her as an ally, and have accorded to her our defense when she went to war.

We have done more: when Italy turned her covetous eyes on our boundaries we decided to maintain peace and alliance at whatever great and painful sacrifice. This is especially painful to our paternal heart. But Italian cupidity which wished to take advantage of the moment, was insatiable. Destiny, however, must be fulfilled. My armies, in faithful fraternity of arms with those of my highest allies, have victoriously sustained a gigantic fight of ten months with the powerful enemy of the east.

The perfidious enemy of the South is not a new adversary. The great memories of Novara, Mortara, Custozza, Lissa, which formed the pride of my youth; the spirit of Radetzky, the Archduke Albert, and of Tegetthoff,[1] which live in my army and

[1] The Austrian Admiral who at Lissa (July 20, 1866) defeated the Italian fleet.

navy, guarantee to me that we shall know how to defend with success the boundaries of the monarchy even on the South.

I salute my troops and their commanders, who have proven themselves victorious, and to whose admirable spirit of sacrifice I owe my deepest gratitude, with the hope that my people will pray to Almighty God to bless our flag and take our cause under his protection.

FRANCIS JOSEPH.

XIV

The "violent and false" speech of von Bethmann-Hollweg, the German chancellor to the Reichstag in Berlin, against Italy (May 28, 1915).

The German chancellor von Bethmann-Hollweg delivered the following speech at the session of the Reichstag of Berlin, May 28, 1915:

When eight days ago I spoke, the hope still existed that it would be possible to put off the war with Italy. The hope was a delusion; in Germany it was impossible to believe that there would be such a sudden change. Today the Italian government has written for all time, in the book of the history of the people and in letters of blood, its act of disloyalty.

It was, I believe, Machiavelli who said that sometimes a necessary war was also a just war; now this war of Italy, considered from a purely materialistic point of view, independent of any moral obligation, is it necessary? Is it not rather madness?

No one, either in Austria or in Germany, threatens Italy. History will judge in the future whether Italy has allowed herself to be seduced by the fine promises of the Entente. Italy might have obtained a series of concessions, of which I have recently spoken: the territories of the Tyrol and Isonzo where Italian is spoken, the acceptation of the national Italian reclamation, a free hand in Albania and the seaport of Avlona which is of great value. Why has not Italy accepted such offers? Does she hope to conquer the Tyrol? Then let her show her hand! Does she want to offend Germany who has done so much to elevate her to a position as one of the great powers, and from whom she is not separated by any discordance of interests? I have left no doubt in the Reichstag on this point; an attack by Italy against the

Austro-Hungarian army would be a blow equally against the German army.

Why has Italy rejected the proposals of Austria? The Italian manifesto published on the occasion of the declaration of war, shows that a bad conscience is hidden under empty phrases, and it gives no explanations. It might perhaps be embarrassing to declare openly some of the things which were said in conversations in parliamentary circles, which were that the Austrian offers have come too late and Italy could have no confidence in them. In reality what does this mean? The Italian statesmen had no reason to put their confidence in the loyalty of our nation *only in proportion to the measure of their own fidelity to the treaties.* Germany gave her word that the Austrian concessions would be realized; therefore Italy had no right to distrust her. Why too late? On May 4, 1915, Trentino existed just as it had previously existed, and to Trentino was joined a series of concessions which were not thought of in the winter.

If it were too late, was it not rather because the Roman statesmen had not hesitated long since, while the triple alliance still existed (an alliance which the King of Italy and the Italian Government had formerly recognized even after the beginning of the war) to compromise themselves so gravely with the Triple Entente, as not to be able to extricate themselves from the meshes?

In December 1914, one could notice the first indication of the change in the Roman Cabinet, because it is always ready to seize upon new opportunities. On the other hand Italy has never ceased, even in past times, to show her predilection for the changes of the dance; but now there is no ballroom, there is instead a bloody battle field in which Germany and Austro-Hungary fight for their lives against a world of enemies. The Italian statesmen have played against their own people the same game that they have played against us.

Undoubtedly the regions of the Italian language situated on the northern frontier were the object of the dreams and the desires of every Italian; but the great majority of the people and the majority of parliament did not want war. During the first days of May, 1915—according to the observations of one who knew Italian affairs very well — the senate (May 4, 1915) and the Chamber of deputies (May 12, 1915), composed of the most serious statesmen, were still against war.

We have done everything possible to prevent Italy from detaching herself from the Triple Alliance. Just for this, we have

assumed the ungrateful task of suggesting to our faithful ally, Austria — by means of her army with which our troops daily divide death and victory — to buy faithfulness from this third ally, ceding to it territory which Austria acquired long ago. It is well known that Austria-Hungary went to the extreme limits of concessions. Prince von Bülow, again in the active service of the Empire, has put to work with untiring energy all of his diplomatic ability, and his exact knowledge of men and of things in Italy, to bring about harmony. If his work has come to naught, the people recognize it just the same.

XV

Antonio Salandra, president of the Italian Cabinet, in a solemn and detailed speech delivered in the Campidoglio of Rome, June 2, 1915, defends Italy from the accusations of the Austro-Hungarian Emperor and the German Chancellor.

On June 2, 1915, Prime Minister Salandra delivered the following memorable discourse [1] in the vast hall of the Horatii in the Campidoglio at Rome.

We have entered upon a war, greater than any other recorded in history, in order to safeguard the oldest and loftiest aspirations, the most vital interests of our country. Italians of every calling in life must not only have, as indeed they have wondrously proved themselves to have, a spontaneous, instinctive and profound sense of justice of our cause and the holiness of our war; they must have also a rational conviction of it, and the whole civilized world must be persuaded of it.

To Italy, therefore, and to the civilized world I now address myself, and I will demonstrate, not with violent words, but with precise facts and with unimpeachable documents how the fury of our enemies has vainly sought to diminish the lofty moral and political dignity of the cause which our arms shall make triumph. I will speak with that calm serenity of which the King of Italy gave so noble an example when he called to arms his soldiers on land

[1] This speech was published in the American papers in October 1915, but was so mutilated and altered as to be deceiving, especially in the documentary parts.

and sea.[1] I will speak as I ought, with all the respect due to my exalted position and to the place where I stand. I can afford to pass by the insults written in imperial, royal and archducal proclamations, because I speak from the Campidoglio, and because I, in this solemn hour, represent the people and the government of Italy. I, a modest burgess, feel myself nobler far than the head of the Hapsburgs.

The mediocre statesmen who with trifling boldness, and mistaken in all their previsions, applied the torch to the whole of Europe, and to their own homes as well, in July 1914, now, seeing the colossal error which has been made, turn with brutal words against Italy and her government in the parliaments of Budapest and Berlin, with the evident purpose of reinstating themselves before their compatriots, and intoxicating them with visions of hatred and blood.

The Chancellor of the German Empire has said he was filled not with hatred but with anger. And very truly he spoke, since he reasoned ill, as one usually does in an excess of rage. I could not, even if I would, imitate that language. An atavistic reversion to primitive barbarism is more difficult to us Italians, who are twenty centuries farther removed from it.

But let us have done with words; let us deal with facts and reasons.

The fundamental argument of the statesmen of Central Europe is summed up in the words, *treachery and surprise*, addressed to Italy — treachery and surprise toward her *faithful allies*. It would be easy enough to ask if a man had any right to speak of alliances and of respect for treaties who, representing with far less genius but with equal indifference to moral considerations the traditions of Frederick the Great and Prince Otto von Bismarck,

[1]Victor Emanuel III, King of Italy, on assuming the command of the land and sea forces, sent out the following order of the day:

"Soldiers of the army and navy: The solemn hour of national vindication has arrived. Following the example of my ancestors, I assume today the supreme command of the army and navy; with the assurance of faith and victory that your valor, your self-abnegation, and your discipline will know how to accomplish. The enemy you are preparing to combat is well equipped and a worthy adversary. Favored by location and by learned military tactics, he will oppose you with tenacious resistance, but your indomitable buoyancy will lead you to victory.

"Soldiers!

"To you will belong the glory of planting the flag of Italy upon the sacred confines which nature placed as the boundaries of our country. To you will belong the glory of finally finishing the work begun by our forefathers, with so much heroism."

"General Headquarters, May 26, 1915. VICTOR EMANUEL."

has dared to proclaim that *necessity knows no law* and has consented to his country's trampling under foot, burning, and burying in the depths of the ocean every document and every civilized practice of public international right.

But this would be too simple and misleading an argument. Let us rather calmly examine the facts and see if our allies have any right to say that they have been betrayed and surprised by us.

It had been evident for a time that our aspirations and our judgment on that act of criminal folly, by which the allies amazed the world, took from the alliance its fundamental reason for being.

The *Green Book*, prepared by Baron Sydney Sonnino, which more than any other diplomatic collection of documents, has permeated the minds of the people, shows the long and painful transactions which dragged on from December, 1915, to May, 1915. It is not true, as astute attempts are being made to show, that the ministry which was reconstituted last November changed the direction of our international policy.

The Italian Government, whose line of conduct has never changed, severely condemned the aggression of Austria against Serbia the very moment it came within its knowledge; and it foresaw the consequences, which those who had with such blindness premeditated the blow had failed to foresee.

Here are the proofs:

I will read the very words, since we are dealing with documents.

On July 25, 1914, two days after Austria had sent the famous ultimatum note to Serbia, the Marquis of San Giuliano, the minister of foreign affairs of the Kingdom of Italy, telegraphed to the Duke of Avarna, the Italian Ambassador at Vienna, as follows:

Today we three, the Prime Minister, Von Flotow and myself, had a long conversation which I summarize for the personal guidance of your Excellency:

Salandra and myself made it quite clear to the Austrian Ambassador that Austria could have no right, according to the spirit of the treaty of the Triple Alliance, to act as she has done at Belgrade without previous understanding with her allies. Austria, in fact, by reason of the tone in which her note is drawn up and by reason of the demands she has made — which demands, while they are of little effect against the Pan-Serbian peril, are deeply offensive to Serbia and indirectly so to Russia — has clearly proved that she intends to provoke a war. We therefore told Von Flotow that in consequence of such a manner of proceeding on the part of Austria and by reason of

the defensive and conservative character of the treaty of the Triple Alliance, Italy is under no obligation to come to the aid of Austria in the event of this action of hers involving her in a war with Russia; since any European war whatever would in this event be the result of a provocative and aggressive act on the part of Austria.

Shortly after, on July 27 or 28, 1914, we raised in clear terms, at Berlin and Vienna, the question of the cession of the Italian provinces of Austria, and we declared that if adequate compensation were not obtained — I am reading the actual words — *the Triple Alliance would be irreparably broken.*

The impartial historian will say that Austria, having found Italy in July, 1913, and in October of the same year, hostile to her aggressive designs against Serbia, attempted last summer in agreement with Germany, to achieve her purpose by the surprise of an accomplished fact.

The execrable crime of Sarajevo was only used as a pretext a month after its perpetration. Austria's refusal to accept the proffered submission of Serbia is proof of this.

Neither at the outbreak of the general conflagration would Austria have been satisfied with the unconditional acceptance of the ultimatum. On July 31, 1914, Count Berchtold (minister of foreign affairs of Austria-Hungary) informed our Ambassador that *even if mediation had been possible, it could not have interrupted the hostilities already engaged in with Serbia.* This was the mediation for which England and Italy were striving. *In any event Count Berchtold was not disposed to accept any mediation which aimed at minimizing the conditions laid down in the Austro-Hungarian note — conditions which could only have been increased at the conclusion of the war. On the other hand, if Serbia, meanwhile, had decided unconditionally to accept the above mentioned note and had declared herself ready to agree to the terms forced upon her — that would not have induced the Imperial and Royal Government of Austro-Hungary to cease hostilities.*

It is not true that Austria pledged herself, as the Hungarian Prime Minister asserted, not to undertake any acquisitions of territory to the damage of Serbia, who, moreover, by accepting all of the conditions imposed on her, would have become a vassal state, even while she might remain unbroken territorially.

On July 30, 1914, the Austrian Ambassador Merey uses the following words to the Marquis of San Giuliano:

Austria cannot make a binding declaration in regard to this matter because she is unable to foresee if during the course of the war

she may not be obliged, against her will, to appropriate Serbian territories.

And on July 29, 1914, Count Berchtold made the Duke of Avarna understand *that he was not disposed to pledge himself in any way as to what he had said to him concerning the eventual conduct of Austria in the case of a conflict with Serbia.*

Where, then, is the betrayal, the treachery, where the surprise, if, after nine months of vain efforts to arrive at an honorable understanding which should recognize in equitable measure our rights and safeguard our interests, we have now resumed our liberty of action and have taken such measures as the interests of our country have counseled us to take?

The fact is, both Austria and Germany believed up to the last few days that they had to do with an Italy not only unwarlike and clamorous, but feeble of purpose, capable of attempting to blackmail, but never of enforcing her proper right by arms — with an Italy that might be paralyzed by the expenditure of a few millions, by shameful underhand methods, and by insinuating themselves between the Country and the Government.

Kings and ministers have talked of the alliance which we have denounced — after they have substantially broken it — as a Providence under whose great wings Italy has lived for many years, has developed economically, and has enlarged her territories. I do not deny the benefits to be derived from the alliance, it would be foolishness to do so; but it would be not a one-sided benefit, but a benefit to all concerned, and perhaps more of an advantage to the others than to us. If it were not so, why did the Central Empire wish to make and to renew it? Was Prince Bismarck a sentimentalist, or a lover of the country where the orange flourishes? And were the princes and the statesmen of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy ever so tender toward us?

It is well to know in reality and with exactness of dates and facts how the alliance has worked in its true spirit during the latter years, and how it contributed to our only territorial enlargement, which was Lybia.

The continual suspicion and the aggressive intentions of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy against the ally are notorious, and are shown by authentic proofs.

The head of the Austrian staff, General Conrad, has always sustained the idea *that war against Italy is inevitable, be it on account of the question of the Irredentist provinces, be it for the jealousy of the Kingdom of Italy for every undertaking of the Austro-Hun-*

garian monarchy in the Balkans and in the eastern part of the Mediterranean.

And at another time he said: "*Italy wishes to expand when she is hardly prepared; in the meantime she opposes all that we wish to undertake in the Balkans. Consequently it is necessary to defeat her in order to leave our hands free.*"

And he deplored that up to 1908, Italy had not been attacked by Austria.[1]

The same Austrian minister of foreign affairs recognized that in the military party of the Empire *the opinion obtained that the kingdom of Italy must be crushed, because from it comes the force of attraction for the Italian provinces for the empire, and that therefore, with the victory over the kingdom of Italy, and with its political annihilation, every hope of the Irredentists would cease. But before the war, we should have oppressed the Italian provinces with rigorous penalties, by opposing ourselves to all of their wishes regarding the question of education.*[2]

This thought shows clearly with what sincerity and good faith the question of the Italian University at Trieste had been promised and put off for so many years!

And now we will see how the allies aided in the conquest of Lybya.

I will speak only of that which is proven by documents.

[1] At the foot of a report regarding the military preparations of the Italo-Austrian boundaries, the above-said General Conrad wrote:

"Why was I not listened to when I proposed and insisted upon attacking Italy in 1908?"

In other words, the zealous head of the Austro-Hungarian staff regretted the opportunity which Austria lost to invade Italy when the latter was struck by the terrible Calabrian-Sicilian earthquake on the last of December, 1908!

[2] Count Berchtold also recognized "the gravity of the problem of the Italians subject to Austria," but he always affirmed that it is an evil without a remedy. Instead the *Armee Zeitung* confessed frankly "that the Italian Irredentists should be destroyed for the highest strategical reasons, for the purpose of not having enemies at their backs on the day when Austria declares war on Italy."

Among the preparations for war by Austria against Italy, which were never objected to by Germany, there was brought one day to the Chamber of deputies in Rome, a singular document in the form of a hand book containing vocabularies and dialogues in Italian and German for use by the Austrian army when it should be ordered — according to its plans — to invade Italy. Its authenticity was guaranteed by the official stamp and was never denied by the commandant at Gratz, nor by the Government of Vienna. One can see in the replies to the questions their great importance and helpfulness when the time might come for the Austrian troops to pass over the frontier into the kingdom of Italy.

"What is the attitude of the Italians? Are they haughty? Are they bold, demoralized or sad?

"Where are the public treasures kept? Where are the depots for grain, wine and food?"

The operations brilliantly begun by the Duke of Abruzzi against the Turkish torpedoes assembled at Prevesa were suddenly and absolutely stopped by Austria.

On October 1, 1911, Aehrenthal [1] said to our Ambassador at Vienna that *our military operations had impressed him painfully, and that they could not be permitted to continue; it was most necessary that they should cease and they were given orders to remain no longer either in the waters of the Adriatic or of the Ionian Sea.*

Worse still, the following day the German Ambassador in Vienna informed our Ambassador confidentially that Aehrenthal had begged of *him to telegraph his own Government to say to the Italian Government that if it had continued in its naval operations in the Adriatic and the Ionian, the Italian Government would have had to treat directly with Austria.* [2]

And not only in the Adriatic and the Ionian did Austria paralyze our action. On November 5, 1911, Count Aehrenthal informed our Ambassador in Vienna that he understood that several Italian battleships were sighted in the vicinity of Salonica where they made electric light projections, and declared *that not one single action on the Ottoman coasts of European Turkey or even on the Islands of the Aegean Sea would be permitted by either Austria-Hungary or Germany because it was contrary to the treaty of the Triple Alliance.*

In March, 1912, Berchtold, who succeeded Aehrenthal, declared to the Ambassador of Germany at Vienna *that regarding one of our operations against the Ottoman-European coast, and the islands of the Aegean Sea, he held Aehrenthal's point of view, according to which operations were considered by the Imperial Royal Government as opposed to the obligations assumed by us in Article VII of the Treaty of the Triple Alliance. Regarding our operations against the Dardanelles,*[3] *he considered it in opposition: first, to our promise not to proceed with any act which would place in jeopardy the status quo of the Balkans; second, to the spirit itself which was based on the maintenance of that same status quo.*

Then when our fleet, finding itself bombarded at the mouth of the Dardanelles by the Turkish forts of Kum Kalessi, replied, damaging these same forts, Berchtold deplored the event, considering

[1] Minister of foreign affairs to Austria-Hungary.

[2] It even resulted that because of the few projectiles thrown by the Duke of Abruzzi from his torpedoes, Austria prepared her entire fleet for immediate action.

[3] This alludes to some Italian torpedoes which succeeded in penetrating (1912) into the strait of the Dardanelles, making a daring raid.

it in contradiction to the promises made; and declared that, *if the Italian Royal Government wished to regain its liberty of action, the Royal Imperial Government was able to do the same.*

He added that he could not permit us in the future to repeat any operations similar to those which had been accomplished, or to do anything at all in opposition to his point of view.

The occupation of Chio [1] was thus prevented.

It is not necessary to repeat how many lives of Italian soldiers, and how many millions of lire, the persistent obstructions at each one of our moves against Turkey have cost us, who were sure of the protection of our allies against every attack in her most vital parts.[2]

Another reproof which was bitterly made was that we were not contented with the *prodigious* concessions which were offered to us in these latter times.

Above all we could ask: were these concessions offered in good faith? The suspicion is born from the reading of the last documents.

The Emperor Francis Joseph has said that Italy looked with cupidity on the patrimony of his own house.

The Chancellor von Bethmann-Holweg said that with such concessions it was meant to buy our fidelity. Therefore, you,

[1] Turkish Island in Aegean Sea.

[2] In the diplomatic conference of London for the Balkanic League against Turkey (1912–1913) Austria, "dragging" Italy to her side, "imposed" the exclusion of Montenegro from the conquered Scutari, and the creation of that autonomous and independent Albania, when, in their own respective zones of influence — at Durazzo, Austria; at Avlona, Italy — the two allied powers believed they had finally found the means to satisfy and silence some of the reasons for their unanswerable and fatal rivalries. But the discussions between Austria and Italy repeatedly gave the impression of the lack of sincerity of Austria toward Italy, especially when on March, 1914, the German Prince, William of Wied, was seated on the throne of the new Albania, around which, there is no doubt, Austria had created a net of Catholic-Austrian-anti-Italian intrigues; a net which was one of the principal causes of that persistent rebellion of the Albanian Mussulman elements (a natural reaction) because of sympathy toward Italian influence, in consequence of which, one sees in September, 1914, the disappearance — in the tumult of the greater war — of the ephemeral sovereignty of this prince who was thrust upon Albania by Germany.

The Austrian struggle in Albania aimed to make of this coast an impenetrable barrier against Italian commerce toward the East. And in all of the Italian Mediterranean there was jealousy and discontent. Thus, when Italy, being in accord with England, obtained a railroad concession in Asia Minor (at Adalia), the spectre of the allies followed her, each one according to his own methods: Austria reclaimed a zone of territory near the place where the Italian railroad started, which it had never thought of doing before; Germany hurriedly sent there the agents of the *Deutsche Bank*, who, under the pretext of selling agricultural machines, attempted to buy up the ground which the Italian railroad occupied.

gentlemen, should applaud us for not having accepted such concessions.

But let us turn to the concessions which reached the Foreign Minister's hands and mine after they had been in the hands of politicians and journalists hither and thither — these belated concessions which, even if accepted as made in good faith, respond in no way to the aims and objects which Italian policy must have in view.

These aims and objects may be reduced to three: 1st. The defense of Italianity, our first and greatest duty. 2nd. A secure military frontier which shall replace that which was imposed on us in 1866, and by which all the gates of Italy are open to our enemies. 3rd. A less dangerous strategical position in the Adriatic, less insecure than that whose effects we have witnessed during the past days.

All those advantages, so essential to us, were practically refused. The offer of the Trentino, an offer increased bit by bit, never has reached, to the gorges of the Adige; it excluded the Ampezzano — that Cortina to which our soldiers have now gloriously arrived — and the upper part — undoubtedly Italian — of the Valley of Non, was refused under the pretext that in Ampezzano, one did not treat with Italian people but with the Ladin people; as if the difference between the Ladins and Italians were not infinitely less than between the Ladins and Teutons. And we had no aspirations for this territory for its importance, but because of the boundaries assigned to us by Austria, in whose power the heads of the valley would have remained, and we would have, as at first, opened the gateway of our own country.[1]

In the *Green Book* there is to be found an ingenuous Austrian document in which it is said approximately: *No, this we cannot give to you because it would spoil our military boundaries.* But we

[1] A propos of the new boundaries offered by the Austrian Government to Italy, Prof. Gino Fani of the Polytechnic school of Turin, in one of his lectures observed that "this new and insidious frontier constitutes a conventional line which always leaves to Austria the upper part of our valleys, and, therefore, the possibility of invasion of territory with no possibility of defense, if such invasion were to come suddenly, and it would be very difficult in any case. In fact the upper parts of the Valley of Non, Avisio, Cordevole and Boite, and the great road of the Dolomites (Bolzano-Lago) would have remained in the hands of Austria, in such a way that while we might have gained some groups of Italian people—leaving always outside of the mother country important Italian centers — from a political and strategical point of view we should certainly have gained nothing.

"Thus the acceptation, while it meant a definite renunciation, would have continued to keep us at the mercy of our neighbor, and aggravate our subjection."

are not treating of the defensive military boundaries of Austria, in which case the pretense of not leaving the door of one's home open, would have been right; one is treating instead, of an offensive military boundary for Italy, because one treats, I repeat, of leaving open the doors of our country.

No concession was offered to us along the coast of the Adriatic, even at the last moment, and when, with sadness in our souls, but thinking that the greatest efforts were necessary to keep out of the war, we stopped to ask, as the least favor, that Trieste and a surrounding zone might be considered not a part of the kingdom of Italy, but only that it should not be considered a part of the Austrian Empire and should be constituted a free State. This was denied; and at Trieste, what did they promise? Autonomous administration!

Another and most important part of the matter in dispute was concerning its execution.

I wonder what you would have said, you Italians, what would our Parliament have said if we, your Government, had presented ourselves before you with the announcement that we were in complete agreement with Austria-Hungary, and that we were to have a part of the Trentino and some other small strip of land not beyond the Isonzo, but only at the conclusion of peace. The "conclusion of peace;" then it was weakened down to the offer, at the last moment, of the nomination of mixed commissions which should study the boundary line; after that, ratification should follow; and after that, and within a month, the territories should be occupied. How much time and how many probable sophisms were used in the development of this procedure?

But we are met with the assertion that we ought to have had no doubts as to the performance of the promise because there would be Germany's guarantee. Let us suppose that this guarantee was made with the full intention of carrying it out. Let us suppose that at the end of the war Germany would be in a condition to keep her word — which is by no means certain. What would our position have been after this agreement? There would have been a new Triple Alliance, a renewed Triple Alliance, but under far other and far inferior conditions than had existed before, because there would have been one sovereign State and two vassal States.

The day on which one of the clauses of the Treaty was not fulfilled, the day on which, whether after a brief period or whether after some years, the municipal autonomy of Trieste was broken

by an imperial decree or any Austrian lieutenant's orders, of whom could we ask redress? Should we have to apply to our common superior — to Germany?

Now, gentlemen, I wish to say that it is not my intention to speak to you of Germany in other terms than those of admiration and respect. I am the Prime Minister of Italy, not the German Chancellor; and I do not lose the light of reason. But with all the respect due to learned, powerful, great Germany, that marvelous example of organization and resistance, I must say, in the name of my country — no vassalage; no protectorate under any one. The dream of a universal hegemony has been shattered. The whole world is risen up against it. The peace and civilization of humanity must in the future be based on respect for existing nationalities, among which great Germany must take her seat as an equal, and not as a mistress.

But the most striking example of the overweening pride with which the men who direct the policy of the German Empire look down on other nations is afforded by the picture which the Chancellor Bethmann-Hollweg has drawn of the Italian political world. I will read it in a more complete form than that given by the newspapers, the form in which it reached us the day after. Here is what the Chancellor said of us:

Italian statesmen have played the same game with their people that they played against us. Without doubt the possession of the territories of the Italian language at the north of her frontiers has always been the objects of the dreams and the desires of every Italian. But the fact is that the greater part of the Italian people, and the majority of parliament were opposed to the war.

In the first days of May, 1915, according to the observations of the best informed men on Italian matters, four-fifths of the Senate and two-thirds of the House were as yet opposed to war. Among them one found the most serious and authoritative statesmen.

But the voice of good sense was not listened to, only the lowest populace reigned.

With the benevolent toleration and the support of the chief members of a Cabinet gorged with the gold of the Triple Entente, the populace, led by unscrupulous provocateurs was goaded to bloody frenzy, threatening the King with a revolution and all the Moderates with assassination if they did not abandon themselves to the delirium of war.

The Italian people were deliberately left in ignorance of the proceedings of the negotiations between Italy and Austria, and of the

importance of the Austrian concessions; in such a manner that, after the resignation of the Salandra Cabinet, one could find no one with sufficient courage to accept and form a new cabinet; and in the course of the decisive discussions, no member of the constitutional parties of the Senate and of the House attempted to appreciate the value of the generous concessions made by Austria.

In this frenzy of war, honest men of politics became mute. But when in future military operations the Italian people shall have regained their good sense, as we hope and desire, then they will recognize how imprudently they were forced to participate in the world wide war.

I know not, Gentlemen, if it was the intention of this man (Bethmann-Hollweg), blinded with rage, personally to insult my colleagues and myself (if it were I should pass it by); men whose past you know; men who have served the State up to the present day; men of unblemished fame; men who have given the lives of their sons for the Country. But think not of us. Give heed rather to the atrocious insult which that scrap of vandal prose flings in the face of our King, in the face of the Italian people, in the face of the Senate and the House, in the faces of those same politicians who held an opinion different from ours. "All dumb," it is said; therefore all cowards.

The information on which this judgment is based is attributed by the Chancellor of the Empire to him whom he calls *the best judge of Italian affairs*. Perhaps he is alluding, with a fraternal desire of shifting the responsibility on to his shoulders, to Prince von Bülow.

Now Gentlemen, I do not wish you to carry away an erroneous impression of Prince von Bülow's intentions. I do believe he had a real sympathy for our country, and that he has done everything in his power to bring about an understanding. But how great and how many are the errors he has made in translating his good intentions into actions! He supposed that Italy could be turned aside from her path by some few millions ill spent and by the influence of a few persons who have lost touch with the soul of the nation, by sinister contact, attempted, but I hope and believe unsuccessfully, with Italian politicians. The very opposite was the result. An immense outburst of [indignation flamed forth throughout the whole of Italy, and not only in the populace, but in the most educated classes; in the noblest breasts; in all those who felt the dignity of the nation; in the whole of our youth ready to shed their purest blood for the national ideals. An outburst of indignation was kindled at the mere suspicion that a foreign

ambassador in Rome should interfere between the Government, the Parliament and the Country.

In this fiery indignation all internal discord melted away, the whole nation was fused together in a wondrous moral unity, which will form our greatest strength in the hard struggle which lies before us, and which must lead us, not by benevolent concessions from others, but by our own integral virtue, to the achievement of the loftiest destinies of our Country.

FOURTH PART

I

First reason: Patriotism.

The compendium of facts narrated in the first part of this work may be officially called "*The History of the Italian Risorgimento*," with the exception of the episode of Balilla, which logically may be considered the prelude to the history.

The narration of these facts differs more or less only in form from the accounts of other writers who have preceded me. And this is but natural, because the form, especially in historical narrative, is simply a reflected quality of the writer — a quality drawn from complex causes purely literary and aesthetic.

The substance is identical. And that, too, is natural. The diversity of form, whether aulic or free, cannot in any manner alter the positive elements of the facts, their dynamic moral substratum, that *veritas* which regulates and dominates the manifestations of human thought and the duties of human conscience.

Now such facts, with their suggestive eloquence, from 1870 were taught in all of the schools of Italy, according to the government programmes. They were continually recalled to mind by an entire nationalist literature extending even to the daily papers. They were kept in mind by eulogies before the monuments erected in the great and small cities of Italy in memory of the martyrs and heroes of revolutions and the wars of liberation provoked in Italy by cruel Austrian domination. They were always represented by the scars, by the anecdotes, by the patriotic enthusiasm of the veterans who were yet living. These facts were the spiritual nutriment, if not the only food, of the ideality which kept the entire peninsula alive and vibrating in its rising political unity.

This accumulation of things in their ceaseless rhythmical repetition could not do other than rekindle and keep permanently burning, in a people so passionate as the Italians, the old hatred against the Austrians. It could not do other than fertilize (even in the most Franciscan souls) the soil from which nothing could grow but a revengeful, militaristic, and ferocious patriotism, the evil weeds from which could be produced but one fruit: that of bitter and wicked warfare.

It is true that Giordano Bruno affirmed that he was a citizen of the world, son of mother Earth and of father Sun.

It is true that Tommaso Campanella demonstrated that peace, prosperity and happiness are impossible without the universal republic.

It is true that even Mazzini and Garibaldi, while fighting for a sane nationalistic principle, fought also for the larger principle of the brotherhood of all peoples.

But contrary to the thoughts and actions of those great Italians, the privileged classes knew full well, theoretically and practically, by means of the servile, dynastic, and non-dynastic governments, how to keep up the selfish old axiom *divide et impera.*

Thus the people, blinded by the astuteness and brutalized by the perfidy of such parasitic hydras, could not see the light diffused by the apostles of truth. They could not assimilate the regenerating elements poured out by the apostles of civilization. They could not free themselves from the cancerous error, which is the above-named false patriotism, the fundamental cause of all the calamities, of all the sorrows which today more than ever oppresses humanity.

In the schools of the different nations (I say in the schools because there the conscience of the future citizens is formed) one should teach the history of wars and the domination of strangers by methods rigorously and concretely objective; that is, one should eliminate from the teaching of history, not only the details of facts describing evil committed on the part of the aggressors who conquer and tyrannize, but also the comments execrating the evil

and magnifying the heroism of those who have been attacked, conquered, and tyrannized over.

In speaking, for example, of the *Five Days of Milan*, the standard books and the teachers should simply say:

In 1848 the Milanese rebelled against their dominators (the Austrians) and after five days of fighting, drove them from the city.

Thus the pupils of the schools would not feel and absorb the poison which generates and nourishes enmity in their innocent souls, by which, as Horace says, "man is a wolf to other men."

The details of facts (for example, the Austrian soldiers during the *Five Days* filed living infants on their bayonets, and cut and pocketed the ringed hands of dead women) should be left to adults, in whom the habits of study have already eliminated, or at least have calmed, the fatal excitability of the baser passions; to the adults, in whom the evolution of the spirit has already developed to the highest point, or to a high point, the sense of reason, and its noblest derivative, Love: Love for one's neighbor.

By this means one might begin to cure the cursed frenzy of war.

And that would be no small matter.

II

Second reason: Irredentism.

The facts, almost all proved by documentary evidence, presented in the second part of the present volume would alone be sufficient to justify the entrance of Italy into the great war.

It was a question with the Italians how to liberate thousands of their consanguineous relations who were oppressed in their own homes (that is, on ground geographically, historically, and morally Italian) by a stranger tyranny that the Italians themselves knew only too well.

It was a question with the Italians how to liberate

thousands of their brothers of the same blood who were fighting, fighting, fighting against such tyranny and had always been longing and imploring to be returned to the breast of their primigenious Latin mother.

It was a question with the Italians how to perform a duty of love and of honor too long delayed.

It was a question with the Italians how to complete their national unity in the northeastern division of their peninsula, affirmed by the law of Rome, and reaffirmed, even immortalized, by Dante in Canto IX of the *Divine Comedy*.

Pola near the Quarnero [gulf] which surrounds Italy and bathes its borders.

Italy, unsupported, had never been able (without risk to her own territorial integrity or worse) to attack Austria alone, as that country was superior to her in number of inhabitants, in wealth, in her army, in the natural fortifications of her boundaries, and because she was sure of the support of Germany.

Italy was obliged to attack the enemy at the opportune and propitious moment; and that moment came when the enemy was engulfed in the great war, and when the historic fates seemed to will that her martyrology, synthesized in the binomial Trent-Trieste, should finally enter into its last phase.

Who could dare to say that the Italian people were in the wrong?

III

Third reason: An unreturned visit.

The Emperor Francis Joseph never returned the visit that King Humbert I and Queen Margherita of Savoy officially made him at Vienna in 1882.

And why?

Because this would have necessitated Francis Joseph's going to Rome, where Humbert and Margherita resided.

Now Rome was never recognized by the Vatican as a legitimate conquest, as the capital of the kingdom of Italy.

The taking of the eternal city by the Italian soldiers September 20, 1870, was always considered by the Vatican as a violent and sacrilegious usurpation. And the Vatican considered the King of Italy an usurper. And the Italian people were also considered usurpers by that same Vatican.

Francis Joseph, rabid Catholic that he was, openly approved the anti-Italian attitude of the papal government, and with full consciousness and of set purpose he failed to observe the rules of *Galatéo*[1] and the duties imposed on him by the Alliance.

Such discourtesies and insincerity were aggravated by the assassinated Crown Prince Franz Ferdinand in Serajevo. This latter, no less a bigot than his uncle, the emperor, often boasted both in public and in private that he would invade Italy with a powerful army, take Rome, and return it to the Catholic Church, and thus re-establish the ancient temporal power of the popes!

How the chivalrous and, more than that, the national sentiments of the people were offended by such facts can well be imagined when one considers that Rome is, as it was in the past, and will be in the future, the source and center of all the virile triumphant grandeur of Italy.

IV

Fourth reason: National cohesion; military efficiency.

The civic greatness of a people, according to the opinion of the majority, consists, or at least did so consist up to the time of the outbreak of the great war, in its national cohesion and in its military efficiency. In Europe and also outside of Europe it was believed, and too confidently, that the Italian people lacked both. Other peoples believed that Italy lacked national cohesion because, after she had brought

[1] Book of Manners, by the classic writer Giovanni Della Casa (XVI century).

about her unity and independence, she was often disturbed by internal discords of a purely regional character; that she lacked military efficiency, as was shown by her utter rout in Africa in the war of 1896 against Abyssinia, and by the lack of military ability also shown in Africa in the war of 1911–12 against Turkey.

One might be led to believe that the peninsula so famous for its beauty and its ancient glories was nothing more than a chain of dilapidated inns and a big carcass of museums where a frivolous and lazy populace could do nothing (between mandolin playing, dancing the tarantella, and macaroni eating alla Napoletana), but serve camoristically as they say, foreigners, who poured down from beyond the Alps and seas, and show them awkwardly and vaingloriously the mummified relics of its past greatness as if it had little relation to the present life, and even less to the future.

A superficial American woman writer, for example, aping the French poet Lamartine, who called Italy the "Land of the Dead,"[1] had the impudence to assert that the Latin race was a "cadaver well on to putrefaction." [2]

And not only in private but also in official circles in foreign countries everyone has had a knowledge, far from exact, of Italy's national cohesion and of her military efficiency. It is sufficient to recall the following incident.

On January 14, 1912, during the Italo-Turkish War, the Italian torpedo boat *Agordat* stopped the French steamer *Carthago* south of Sardinia, because the Italian Government knew that it carried an aeroplane which was destined for the Turks in Tripoli. After the search which the Italian officers made of the French steamer, this aeroplane was taken by the *Agordat* to the port of Cagliari in Sardinia, and there was placed at the disposal of the Italian Government.

A few days later, that is on January 18th, this same torpedo boat *Agordat* stopped the postal steamer *Manouba*, which plied between Marseilles and Tunis, and found there were twenty-nine Turkish officers aboard dressed in the

[1] See the spicy reply to this given by the Italian satirical poet Giuseppe Giusti.

[2] See in my volume *Journalism of the Italian Emigrants in America* answer which was given to this good woman (pages 118–123).

garb of the Mohammedan Red Cross, secretly making their way into Tripoli to take their places at the head of the Arabs against the Italians. The twenty-nine so-called members of the Turkish Red Cross were put ashore by the crew of the *Agordat* at Cagliari, Sardinia, and there held at the disposition of the Italian Government, while the *Manouba* was left free to continue on its way.

Poincaré, who previously had been made premier and foreign minister of the French Republic, protested against the "arbitrary acts" committed by the Italian torpedo boat *Agordat*, and had the courage to declare among other things in open parliament, that if the government of Rome had not freed the *Carthago* and the twenty-nine Turkish officers immediately, the French fleet would have attacked the Italian fleet without delay and would have sent it to the bottom in less time than it takes to tell of it, — just as one might say that he would send to the bottom the three glorious caravels of Christopher Colombus!

Now a people so calumniated and so misjudged, a people who through Rome have touched the apogee of national cohesion and of military efficiency, must naturally feel the necessity of demonstrating with facts (it would be impossible with mere words) how false was the opinion which the world had formed of them.

And they forced the war against Austria on the Government of Victor Emanuel III, to prove that they, the Italian people, notwithstanding their internal discords of a character purely regional (discords provoked by the injustice of government more than by anything else) have today, as in the days of Cato, a solid national cohesion; to prove that they, the Italians, notwithstanding the rout in the war against Abyssinia, and notwithstanding the deficiences in the war against Turkey (routs and deficiencies coming more than anything else from errors of government), have today, as in the times of Julius Caesar, a formidable military efficiency. Formidable, one means, not so much in a quantitative as in a qualitative sense: in genius, in vigor, in enthusiasm, in tenacity and in faith of their final victory.

They, the Italian people, forced intervention in the great

war on Austria to prove that they, the people, because of one of those natural laws (law of continuity)—which eludes the ignorant—can always reclothe themselves in the virtues of their ancestors; to prove that they can, when they will, rise (like the eternal Arabian phoenix) from the ashes of their millenaries of civilization.

V

Fifth reason: Fear of isolation.

The Italian people quickly understood that the great war which burst out in the latter part of July 1914 would produce international political changes of the utmost importance. And they foresaw the calamitous effects that such changes would bring to the Patria did she remain neutral.

If the Central Empires (Germany and Austria) should conquer, Italy would remain at the mercy of these two nations made bolder by their recent victories. She would have suffered the vendetta which the Teutons had sworn because she had not drawn up in line of battle on their side. She would have been invaded and conquered. She would again have become the slave of Austria. And England, France, and Russia, whom she had abandoned and left defeated and humiliated, would not have done other than laugh at her coldly with hate and scorn.

If the nations of the Triple Entente (England, France, and Russia) had remained conquerors, Italy would have been obliged to submit to the masterful influence of these three nations as the punishment for her neutrality, influence which would have grown immeasurably after their victories. She would have been so blocked on all sides in the Mediterranean that she could not have had free access even to her African colonies. She would have been paralyzed in every expansive movement. She would have been reduced to poverty. And Germany and Austria, whom she had left defeated and humiliated, would then have laughed coldly at her with hate and scorn.

In fact, Italy, had she remained neutral in the great war, would have lost all credit, all prestige in the world. She would not have been considered nor respected by any one. She would have been spurned by every one, by the conquered and by the conquerors, as a mangy dog, and avoided as a wormy carcass. She would have placed in jeopardy even her own national unity.

In order to escape such misfortune, the Italian people imposed on the Government of Victor Emanuel III armed intervention by the nation.

Is not the preservation of one's own life, either individually or collectively, one of the supreme natural laws, the protoplasmic law of all human laws? Is it not perhaps the most impelling physical and moral necessity — the supreme necessity?

VI

Sixth reason: The right to travel.

Man has the right at any time in his life to go about the world far and wide. He has the right to go where his will prompts and where his interests call him. This is a natural right which no one can contest, for the simple reason that the right to travel was born with the first man for his needs and enjoyment; for the simple reason that the right to travel is a motor force of human progress, a force that more than any other contributes to create, to cultivate, to consolidate (between people separated by distance, and more than by distance, by prejudice of race and nationality) those currents of sympathy which by an irresistible impulse of love tend toward universal brotherhood, that is, to the apogee of civilization which has for its substantial contents (besides the splendor of science, of arts and letters) the moral purity of the spirit, which man must sincerely feel toward his equals.

I enunciated and sustained this idea in my book, *Journalism of the Italian Emigrants in America*, on page 104 where I said, among other things, that "for that great and sacred

social principle, based upon the fact that every man has the right to go to any country, to exercise freely and honestly the demands of his work," the Italians who have emigrated to the United States could not with a servile sense of gratitude, consider and exalt the American people as hosts. More than this, the Americans, at least at that time, did not receive them as equals. And yet these same Americans have received a great part of the prosperity which has rendered them so unreasonable, so unjust and overbearing, by means of the strong and willing brawn of the Italian emigrants.

And I corroborated my statement by subjoining: "The English, the French, the Teutons, the Americans themselves and all other foreigners whom one finds in Italy, speculating and enriching themselves with flourishing industries and commerce, never have dreamed of considering themselves guests of the Italian people, but free men, who come to our country to exercise the rights of their inclinations and their interests."

Only tyrants who wish to provoke and direct wars dare to contest and even to crush, in the cruelest manner, the right that man has at any time in his life to travel far and wide through the world. They wish to provoke and direct war, thus blocking the land and waters wherever it pleases them to do so, and forget or feign to forget that the globe inhabited by men is for all men, as is the air which surrounds the globe itself; as is the sun which illuminates, warms, and fertilizes the globe.

These tyrants who wish to provoke and direct war, thus preventing man (the one who is not implicated in war and who is opposed to war) from going where his will prompts, where his interests call, commit an arbitrary act of the greatest gravity which no people, having at heart their own liberty and the liberty of others, should tolerate.

The people of the new Italy, strong in their reawakened consciousness, would not tolerate it. And they imposed on the Government of Savoy armed intervention of the nation in the European war to defend with their own blood one of the most precious gifts of nature.

Thus the people of the new Italy devotedly followed the

examples of their apostles who preferred prisons, tortures, or the stake rather than yield to any restriction whatsoever of human liberty either for themselves or for humanity whom they worthily represented.

VII

Seventh reason: Human solidarity.

The Italian people, on account of one of the natural laws which psychologically distinguish the human races from one another, have implanted in them two sentiments: a sentiment of sympathy for the weak, and a sentiment of indignation against the strong who abuse and tyrannize over the weak. These sentiments form, in the peculiar harmony of their spiritual essence and of their practical workings out, the granite-like foundation of their social life.

Glance for a moment at the history of Italy from the time of the famous republic of Magna Grecia, which has grown and blossomed in the southern part of the peninsula up to the present time, and one cannot fail to see that the Italian people were always moved by the condition of the weaker. They embraced their cause in fact, and not in words, for magnanimous and not for selfish and material reasons, especially when their cause represented the trampling upon or simply the menacing of their national liberties by presuming tyrants.

In corroboration of the above statement, I will limit myself to a few of the more recent historical facts.

Giuseppe Garibaldi with a corps of Italian soldiers went to the defense of the French Republic in the war of 1870 against the Prussians, performing heroic deeds at Dijon worthy of an epopee.[1]

Ricciotti Garibaldi, living son of the Hero, with a corps of Italian volunteers went to the defense of Greece against

[1] Victor Hugo said: "During that memorable campaign Garibaldi was the only captain who really conquered."

Turkey in 1897, performing heroic deeds worthy of an epopee at Domokos.[1]

Peppino Garibaldi, living son of Ricciotti, with a corps of Italian volunteers went to the defense of the French Republic in the present war against Germany, performing heroic deeds worthy of an epopee in the Argonne.[2]

And not only in battles of a collective public nature, but also in the altercations of a private and personal character, the Italian people have put in evidence — or better, into action — their innate sentiments of sympathy for the weaker and of indignation against the stronger (strong naturally, in the brutally physical sense of the word, be it understood). In America, for example (particularly in the city where for many years I have lived), I have frequently witnessed disputes between two persons, usually for some trivial reason, which quickly ended by their coming to blows. No one among the bystanders ever moves to try to pacify the two disputants or even to prevent the weaker from receiving the worst of it. I have always seen the stronger throw the weaker to the ground undisturbed by anyone; stamp on his breast, his jaws, his nose, his eyes, transforming his countenance into a horrible bloody mass, leaving him half dead. The bystanders, even the acquaintances, friends, or relatives of the weaker, look on with indifference (as if it were a moving picture) or with vile voluptuousness at the doglike fight, seeming to feel an admiration for the stronger.

In Italy, particularly in my native Calabria, which with good reason is called strong and generous, nothing of this kind could occur. There the bystanders, even though they might be strangers; from the first word of altercation interpose themselves between the disputants. And if they are unable to calm them with reason and re-establish peace between them and thus prevent the bestial fight, they

[1] In the battle of Domokos, among others who fell was Antonio Fratti, the Republican deputy of the Italian National Parliament to whom Guglielmo Oberdan left his political testament.

[2] In the battle of the Argonne, between the Garibaldians and the Germans, among other Italians who fell were the young Bruno and Sante Garibaldi, brothers of Peppino.

immediately sympathize with the weaker; they openly and resolutely take his part; they will not permit that a hair of his head shall be touched; they prefer even at the risk of death to themselves to receive the blows from the stronger, on whose head will descend, sooner or later, a general execration.

Now this people, so sensitive, so just, so humane, having at their command a sufficiently formidable army and navy, could not remain inert before the violence committed by the strong and tyrannical Austria against little Serbia. They could not remain inert before the incomparable crime committed by the strong and tyrannical Germany against little Belgium. They could not remain inert before a scowling and brutal Teutonic militarism which menaces with growing and strengthening gravity that republican France which had poured out rivers of her blood for the unity and independence of her Latin sister and for the triumph of democratic principles in all of Europe. They could not remain inert before a scowling and brutal Teutonic militarism which menaced with growing and strenghtening gravity that England which even in a time of general reaction gave hospitality with generous and affectionate liberality to the great exiles, to all the great Italian political refugees from Giordano Bruno to Ugo Foscolo, from Mazzini to Malatesta;[1] to that England which, with its battleships *Intrepid* and *Argus*, protected and facilitated in the spring of 1860 the memorable landing of *The Thousand* at Marsala (a disembarkation which decided the national unity of Italy); that England which received Garibaldi like a god when the Hero in April, 1864, went as a representative of the people of the new Italy to visit London. They could not remain inert before the scowling and brutal Teutonic militarism which menaced with growing and strengthening gravity that Russia whose great men such as Turghenieff, Tchernichewsky, Tolstoy, Gogol, and

[1] Dr. E. Malatesta, one of the living Italian anarchist leaders, between June 7 and 10, 1914, headed a revolutionary movement which had for its object the overthrowing of the monarchy of Savoy and the proclaiming of the Republic of Italy, in the provinces of Ancona, Forlì, and Ravenna. Prosecuted by the government of Victor Emanuel III, he wandered all over Europe and was everywhere repulsed. He found refuge only in London, where he now lives.

Gorky always admired and glorified Italy;[1] that Russia which was the first to send her sailors to Calabria and Sicily to succor the people struck by the terrible earthquake of 1908.

If the Italian people had remained inert, they would have negated their incomparable moral personality which is composed of altruism and gratitude; they would have obscured their most radiant traditions of thought and action; they would have done that which is worse: at the moment when death was preparing to form the new life of the world on the battlefields of old Europe, they would have betrayed the cause of humanity, which must stand above every personal and national interest, as the physical life of the universe stands perennially above the single parts of which it is composed.

It is useless to deny it. The word, opposed to the fact, has never been of value. And it never will be so long as in the depths of certain human souls there dwell, as the morchia[2] at the bottom of jars of olive oil, as feccia[3] in the bottom of wine casks, as slime in the bottom of wells, those turbid and wicked instincts which are in open antithesis to the sentiments of purity, compassion, and love upon which every civilization should lean and from which it should evolve.

The plea has always been made, and in every tone, to the potentates of Europe, not to strengthen militarism; but they have strengthened it — and alas, how well!

The potentates of Europe have been counseled in every manner not to provoke war; but they have provoked it, and how well!

Must one ignore the fact in this, the beginning of the twentieth century, that the imperial soldiery, atavistically imitating the hordes of Alaric and Attila, invade the territories of small and independent nations, massacre men, outrage women, mutilate children, seize the fruits of

[1] It is well to remember Maxim Gorky, who, after having been repulsed by the United States because of a false puritanism, found refuge at Capri; and there, received with respectful and affectionate hospitality, put in relief and exalted in his writings the incomparable virtues of the Italian people.

[2] The dregs of olive oil. [3] The dregs of wine.

so much labor, burn homes, raze entire cities to the ground, in such a manner for example, as the Turks have been allowed to treat the Armenians for years and years?

If these things must be forgotten, then farewell to human solidarity.

After so many promises, after so much enthusiasm, it could not be other (except for the weak who have the simplicity to believe and expect it) than an archaic, empty and scoffing phrase, resurrecting once again the ignoble farce of pulpiteers (both priests and laity) who know only how to preach well and practice badly. The pulpiteers who, when put to the test, know only how to put in practice their selfish doctrine which is encased in the parabolic formula, "Lontana da me, e dove va va."[1]

The great crowned heads would not have wished anything better!

Fortunately the Italian people, with their awakened intelligence, understood that words could not supplant the facts.[2] And they threw themselves into the war (they, the Italian people, with their childlike hearts) to meet facts with facts, action with action, physical force with physical force (a species of *similia similibus curantur*), to teach the mob of querulous doctrinaires that the trampled rights of the weak must be defended, not with words, but at the sacrifice of life itself; that the innocent victims of barbarism (militaristic and non-militaristic) must be avenged, not with words, but at the sacrifice of life itself; that the true brotherhood of nations, the ideal to which the human soul incessantly aspires because of an immutable natural law, must be

[1] "It may go where it will if it does not touch me."

[2] In the month of May, 1915 (that is, on the eve of the declaration of war made by the Italian government against the Austrian government), the walls of the cities of Italy were covered with placards which said:

"We must never forget
Belgium,
The Lusitania,
The cutthroats of babies,
The aged who were massacred,
The violated women,
The devastated countries,
The bombarded hospitals,
for the sole mania of destruction by the army of his majesty William II."

affirmed, be exalted, be perpetuated, not with words but at the sacrifice of life itself.

The Italian people know well that after the great war they will have no other reward than that of starvation, scorn and oblivion worse than before. But of what importance is this? With spirits eminently poetic and philosophic at the same time, inured to every privation, to every ingratitude, to every sorrow, they will be convinced of having opened the way, with their purest blood — given the present order of things, the only way that could lead to the longed-for universal peace. And such knowledge will be sufficient to render them content, happy, and blessed.

I have said, "given the present order of things." I have said, "the only way." And I will explain.

The life of a nation, nowadays, notwithstanding its complexities, depends in great part on essentially industrial bases constructed by the people, not for their own advantage, but for the advantage of a big-bellied and cruel minority called plutocracy, which has nothing else in common with the people except their simple Darwinian origin.

Such national industrialism, in order to maintain itself and prosper — always to the benefit of the big-bellied and cruel minority called plutocracy — must necessarily push itself into commercial competition against the industrialism of another nation, or other nations, and vice versa. But commercial competition, in order to give financial results proportionate to the insatiable greed of the nationalist plutocracy, must be incessantly and strenuously favored and defended by the State.

Does a State government of the present day lend itself to a partisanship so bold and iniquitious?

Certainly it does!

And why shouldn't it, if the State government of today, be it covered by a mask surmounted by a royal crown, or be it a mask surmounted by a republican cap, is none other than a being voluntarily placed at the service of the big-bellied and cruel minority called plutocracy?

Now a Government thus made, frankly, could not without injury to itself put in action the military forces, which

are the positive forces of the State, except for the protection of its master; or more correctly speaking, for the protection of its mistress (plutocracy in the Italian language is in the feminine gender). Italy in its war against Africa, for example (that is, against Abyssinia and Turkey), had no other aim, at least originally, except that of the so-called "commercial penetration" made by the monarchical Government of Savoy in the interests of Italian plutocracy. And the war which today rages in Europe is one provoked for no other reason than that of jealousy of the German plutocracy, for the English commercial supremacy in the world.[1]

In causes of a purely humanitarian character — that is, where the intellectual, moral and economic elevation, justice, liberty and the happiness of the people are involved — the government of today never puts into action the military forces of the State. And this is natural; for if the military forces were to make the humanitarian causes triumph, only one effect could follow: the end of plutocracy; the end, that is, of inequality, of all injustice, of all social tyrannies: an effect, as one can see, completely opposed to that for which the military forces of a nation exist today. In causes of a purely humanitarian character, the Government of today employs only the negative force of the State: diplomacy, which would have no other result than that of chattering; stirring up confusion; tangling the skeins of yarn as much as possible; throwing dust in the eyes of the masses; anæsthetizing the nation; reducing every heart throb of collective life to *status quo;* to this most convenient Latin ellipsis (convenient for the strong, but wickedly disastrous for the weak), which is fossilized and is fossilizing.

Must the nations continue to face a situation so evident, so tangible in chronic evil, opposing the murderous facts of the deaf and ferocious plutocrats with only the usual innocuous words?

If so, the people could not do other than rivet to themselves the chains of servitude; they could not do other than perpetuate war, always to the advantage of the more astute,

[1] The other causes which determined the great war (pan-Slavism, French *revenge,* Italian Irredentism, etc.) were all of secondary importance.

who idly reap all of the benefits, and to the damage of the credulous, who labor and who suffer.

So long as nationalistic industrialisms with their respective commercial competitions exist; so long as plutocracies exist which have in their hands to dispose of at their pleasure all of the positive forces of the nations (from financial to military), duly legalized by governments and blessed by religions, which are also, by the grace of God, at the service of the strong; so long as plutocracies provoke war because of a thirst for riches and dominion, originated by innate hardness of heart; so long as all this exists, the inertia of the people, armed only by old lachrymose and even scornful rhetoric, is not other, to my mind, than an incongruity, anachronism, folly, suicide. It is the fragile glass that would resist the powerful blow of the sledge hammer, the soap bubble that would resist the rock.

The way must be changed. We are in a century in which one must reasonably believe in only a single truth: that which teaches — or better, is demonstrated by — positive science. One must therefore live a little less in the metaphysical world of dreams, and a little more in the physical world of reality. The words with which Joshua stopped the sun and moon, the words with which Christ raised Lazarus of Bethany, are no other now than old and rusty biblical iron.

The people must have facts. They must, without distinction, create among themselves a solid spiritual alliance (prodrome of their universal political union): and establish as a fundamental principle of justice, inviolate and invariable, that when a controversy between two nations degenerates into war, each of the people not involved in the controversy so degenerated must *a priori* impose on their own government an armed intervention in favor of the weaker nation which one finds on the side of reason On the side of reason, not according to the porcine point of view of the big-bellied, cruel minority called plutocracy; not according to verbose partisan laws voted by parliaments and sanctioned by kings, emperors or presidents of republics; not according to the fantastic and complacent sentences

flung by petticoated comedians of the different arbitrary tribunals of the Hague. But on the side of reason according to the judgment that springs spontaneously, free from preconceived ideas and passions, from free intelligence, from the candid conscience of the people themselves: above all, according to the natural guide of life which makes the cause of the weak always beautiful, sacred, and worthy of victory.

Only in such a manner for the present can one curb the aggressive mania of the stronger. Only in such a manner can wars be prevented.

In fact, if the Government of Francis Joseph, for example, could have known *in anticipation* that the peoples of Europe, even of the whole world, would rise up and intervene promptly with all of the positive forces of their nations in defense of little Serbia, the Government of Francis Joseph, however powerful and arrogant, however much upheld by that military colossus, the German Empire, would never have dared to dictate to the little Balkan nation who was defending her own independence. It would not have had the insane temerity to send to it in July, 1914, that ultimatum which unchained the most terrible inferno in the world's history.

But the spiritual alliance of the people (prodrome of a universal political union) can never be effected if from the first the two most advanced groups of doctrinaires, which have an extraordinary moral ascendency over the people, do not know how to adapt effectively their pacifist theories — freed from every dogmatic sophism — to the events which day by day unfold themselves.

The first group: those who limit human progress to the struggle between classes (the economic problem) are in favor of war only in the case where it is necessary to defend from an invading foe the country in which all the material interests of the national proletariat are concentrated. These are the *Conditional Neutrals.*

The second group: those who await the destruction of every political, judicial, military, economic and religious

authority by revolution and are opposed to all wars, because wars are made only for the round-bellies of their masters. These are *Absolute Neutrals.*

The members of these groups are doubtless animated by right motives. They aim at the high purpose which every open and active mind and sensitive heart aims: the emancipation of all oppressed beings. I therefore wish to reason calmly with them.[1]

And I say to the Conditional Neutrals:

The theory of war only for national defense, which you sustain, is in open contradiction to the doctrines which you say that you profess,—doctrines which in their idealistic contents are conspicuously and rigorously international and do not admit of restrictions of any sort. The cry, "Workmen of every nation, unite!" in which are synthesized those doctrines which cannot be interpreted exclusively in the economic sense as you seem to believe — must be interpreted logically in a much wider sense, at least if one would not wish to belittle the merit of him who launched it; must be interpreted in a sense embracing every social problem from which the economic problem cannot be eliminated without disturbing the harmony or absolutely breaking the compages of things which regulate and perpetuate human progress.

Because the social question is polyhedric. And the economic problem is none other than a part of the social question, one face of the polyhedron each part of which is intimately connected with the others; and the economic problem is even dependent upon the others and it comes from one cause: ignorance. This was clearly demonstrated three centuries ago, during the most horrible torture of the lay and ecclesiastic inquisition, by that most daring father of universal communism, my encyclopædic fellow-countryman, Tommaso Campanella.

According to the belief of this giant precursor of the civil redemption of humanity — a belief which has been

[1] I do not occupy myself with the other groups of pacifists, because they — being an emanation more or less direct from the plutocracy — cannot be logical.

"Let us not speak of them, but look and pass."

(Dante, Inferno, Canto III.)

fully confirmed by the facts of the social situation, our maladjustments come from the following causes:

First — *Ignorance*, which, preventing the knowledge of true vices and of true virtues, generates and nourishes evil, "under which the world chafes and weeps."

Second — *Blind Self-love;* that is, Egotism, worthy son of Ignorance.

Third — *Tyranny* (false power), *sophism* (false science), *Hypocrisy* (false love), the three extreme evils (the triple lies) which have "root and fomentation" in blind self-love.

Fourth — *Famine;* that is, *misery* (the economic problem), *wars*, *pestilence*, *envy*, *deceit*, *injustice*, *luxury*, *sloth*, *disdain*, all derived from the three extreme evils to which they are hierarchically subject.

Therefore, the economic problem cannot be detached from the others; cannot be settled independently of the others. If it could thus be resolved, its isolated solution could not attain its object (the moral betterment of the world) toward which the whole question tends. And the proof of this, my assertion, which at first seems a paradox, comes to us by means of this same plutocracy in an unanswerable manner.

It is a fact, and I trust that on this point there will be no divergence of opinion, that plutocracy is composed of flesh and bone, is of exactly the same species as that of the proletariat.

The plutocrats have splendidly solved the economic problem to their own advantage. I trust that on *this* point there may be no difference of opinion.

But has the solution of the problem which has brought all of the luxuries, all of the sensual pleasures of life within the reach of the plutocrats,— has it brought to them a proportionate betterment?

Absolutely it has not.

The solution of the economic problem (luxuries and sensual pleasures *ad infinitum*) has instead brought to the plutocrats a fearful moral retrogression visible even to the blind. It has taught that this solution, when unaccompanied by the solution of the other social problems, is not

and never can be the panacea which is preached by superficial and short-sighted theorists. It has demonstrated once more, and today more than ever, the positive value of the truth which was proclaimed in the difficult and dark ages by that great apostle from Stilo, Calabria, who was, with Vinci, Pomponazzi, Telesio, Bruno, and Galilei, one of the creative geniuses of modern positivism; of that positivism which for the voluble authority of the word substituted the solid authority of facts; of that positivism culminating in our day in the monumental works of that other pure Italian who is the living pride and glory of Italy: Professor Roberto Ardigò.

And if the cry which synthesizes the doctrine professed by you, Conditional Neutrals, has a content conspicuously and rigorously international, I do not understand with what conscience or more, with what heart, you can restrict the war to national defense only, permitting the stronger nation, which is found on the side of wrong, to assault and devour at its pleasure the weaker nations which are found on the side of right.

Such a restrictive principle (war only for national defense) is an unheard of and selfish cruelty. It is the most repugnant ironic interpretation of internationalism, or what calls itself internationalism. It is the absolute negation of every human and animal solidarity. I say animal, because even the animals feel and put in practice among themselves that which we humans call moral solidarity toward the weak. The example of the dog suffices to illustrate this. He continually risks his own life to defend the weak and innocent sheep from the strong, arrogant, and savage wolf.

And your own nation, my dear Conditional Neutrals, would not be long in falling a victim to the plutocratic perfidy and cupidity of some stronger nation; a victim of your own error.

Because it is not enough to wish to defend. One must be able to defend. Serbia also wished to defend herself against Austria. Belgium wished to defend herself against Germany. But each one, being too small, and in consequence too feeble compared with its aggressors, was con-

strained to succumb, notwithstanding the fact that it based its defense on its rights of independence and on points of honor more than sacred.

And the two heroic peoples (Serbia and Belgium) can never rise again, and will always remain slaves of the tyrants who have trampled upon them with military brutality, if they must await aid from brothers who boast themselves internationalists but remain encased in their shell of national neutrality.

And if the social question embraces many other problems besides that of the economic, and if the emancipation of the oppressed depends on the parallel solution of all of these problems and not on the solution of only one of them, I do not understand why you, followers of the cry which synthesizes the social question in all of its idealistic entirety, must persist only in the solution of the economic problem. I do not understand how you can detach yourselves or interest yourselves so little in the other problems when it is demonstrated that the parallel solution of all, not the isolated solution of one, can eliminate evils "under which the world trembles and weeps"; the evils which retard the longed-for emancipation.

One knows that nowadays wars are not waged to revenge the offended honor of Menelaus — who may be more or less crowned — as, for example, was the mythological war of Greece made against Troy of Homeric memory.

Wars nowadays, as has been hinted before and as you yourselves, Conditional Neutrals, recognize, are made for ends essentially economic; for ends such as the doctrines which you are said to profess tend, even when interpreted in their highest sense.

And if they are made for ends essentially economic, I do not see the reason for which you, followers of internationalism reduced even to its lowest terms, that is to strictly economic terms, should abstain from intervention.

Because such ends, you object, do not touch the economic interests of our national proletariat.

That the economic interests of a neutral nation are endangered — given the present industrial and commercial

organization of the world — by a war between two or more nations, and especially by a war of such gigantic proportions as that which has been raging for three years in old Europe and by reflection has affected the whole world, is a self-evident truth to every intelligence.

But even if — to take it as an hypothesis — the economic interests of the neutral national proletariat were not endangered by the war of others, you Conditional Neutrals should consider it equally your duty to interfere to defend the economic interests of the proletariat of the weaker nation which is assaulted by the plutocratically stronger, and this because of the factive elements and not the chatterings of the doctrines which you say that you profess.

The sentimental scruples which will not permit you to intervene in war because you would be constrained to kill your brothers, must be eliminated.

In case of national defense would not the invaders be your brothers whom you would be obliged to kill?

Are not the *scabs* also your brothers, and brothers of your own nation whom you fight and kill during the strikes?

And these strikes themselves which you are continually making as defensive means in the class struggle, are they not substantially wars between brothers who are exploited, and those who are not; wars of hate between unionist and non-unionist brothers?

You unionist workmen strike, assault, and kill without mercy your non-unionist brothers. And why? To defend yourselves against their economic competition. But these non-unionists rarely take your places in your work for malignant reasons. In the majority of cases they are none other (and I know this only too well) than sons, brothers, husbands, and fathers reduced to extreme misery. They, not knowing to what saint to pray in their extremity or where to turn their heads, face your insults with desperation in their souls and run to the conquest of a mouthful of bread or a bit of coal which may save those dependent upon them from starvation.

You do not wish to face these facts. You do not wish

to know the reasons, which are beyond their control, which force your unfortunate brothers to enter into competition against you. You know only that they injure your cause, and for this you fight to destroy them.

And the *gunmen*, so-called in America (I allude to the savage private policemen charged to "maintain order" during the strikes) are they not also your brothers? Why then do you fight and destroy them?

Because they do not hesitate to shoot you. Because they do not hesitate to massacre your women and children.

I compare the scabs to the conscript soldiers. I compare the gunmen to the professional soldier. The unwilling action of the one (scab and conscript) is inspired as is the voluntary action of the other (gunman and professional soldier) by plutocracy and is stirred up by plutocracy and terminates also to the advantage of plutocracy.

Now if you unionist workmen representing internationalism synthesized in the cry, "Workmen of all countries, unite!" if you fight to destroy scabs and gunmen during strikes, why should you not fight to kill soldiers in time of war? The scabs and gunmen, I repeat, are your brothers as also are the soldiers. The sins which the soldiers commit have the same root of evil as the scabs and gunmen; they have only one root: plutocracy. This is the new and real Pandora's box.

And if, with the struggle of classes culminating in the murder of scabs and gunmen during strikes, you, Conditional Neutrals, economically defend your national proletariat interests against your national plutocracy, you must at the same time and for the sake of the international doctrine which you say you profess, not only admit the justice of armed intervention in every way today in defense, not only of the territorial integrity of your nation, protecting the material interests of your national proletariat, but, also in defense of the territorial integrity including the material interests of all of the other weaker nations assaulted by the common enemy (plutocracy) for economic and insatiable greed.

If you will persist in your restrictive attitude, Conditional Neutrals, you will end by discrediting the cry synthesizing the doctrine which you boast that you profess, because this cry was launched to give a deadly blow by means of the union of workmen of every country, not to the plutocracy of one nation only, but to plutocracies of every nation.

If the plutocracies of every nation, instead of dying, continue to fatten on the blood of the workmen of every country, it signifies that your restrictive action (that of conditional neutrality) is not the right interpretation of the cry synthesized in the doctrine reduced even to purely economic terms.

And if, on the other hand, the workmen of five of the greatest and most advanced nations of the world (France, England, Russia, Japan and Italy) — those who have listened to the gospel synthesizing the doctrine in the cry, "Workman of all nations, unite!" — had placed themselves militarily at the side of Serbia and Belgium, this would have signified that they repudiated the restrictive interpretation of conditional neutrality and resolutely put into practice, especially the Italian proletariats, all of the idealistic contents, conspicuously and rigorously international, which their cry represented.

You, Conditional Neutrals, must recognize the error into which you have fallen (error, considering the time in which we live, considering the formidable positive efficiency reached by plutocracies). You must follow the practical good sense of the people. If you do not do this, your ranks will continually become thinner; you will be swallowed up in the furious whirlwind of facts.

If you obstinately refuse to follow the people in their practical good sense, it means that you do not understand their spirit.

And the people will abandon you, and they will give themselves to those who will know how to lead them by a less tortuous road to their emancipation.

Because the people are tired of waiting. Their physical and moral sufferings are growing in proportion to the commodities and sensual pleasures of plutocracy. These suf-

ferings have increased in constant ratio to the increase of the sensual pleasure of the plutocracy.

The people are tired of waiting.

Conditional Neutrals, meditate on these truths.

And I say to the Absolute Neutrals:

Is it true, as you have held and as I myself maintain, that nowadays war is made for the round-bellies of the plutocrats. But who does the fighting? Is it the plutocrats who fight? The plutocrats only provoke and direct wars. Those who in reality bear the brunt of the war are the people whom the plutocrats dominate.

Now among those who are at war are also Absolute Neutrals garbed as soldiers, not willingly so, but because of one of those partisan laws favorable to plutocracy (military conscription) which has been spoken of before.

And if they are the people who must fight; and if they are your brothers; and if their industrial and collective lives are placed in jeopardy, how can you remain disinterested and inert?

You could remain thus disinterested and inert, only if the plutocrats lived on a different planet from that upon which the people live, on which your brothers live, and where they could fight among themselves.

But from the moment that the plutocrats inhabit a planet inhabited also by the people, your brothers, and with the positive means at their command to enable them at their pleasure to provoke and direct wars, it is necessary that you take an interested and active part in such wars.

Because the plutocrats lose nothing by wars; they always gain. It is the people, your brothers, the humble, those who have always striven and suffered day and night who in war lose everything. Your absolute neutrality—in the face of the weak massacred on the field of battle, before their ravished virgins, their mutilated children, their sacked and burned homes—places you in the same category as the authorities (sanctified afterward by the church) who retire to the solitude of the desert and there, whistling at the oppressed, selfishly and stupidly think of nothing except the eternal salvation of their souls.

You object: "But why don't the people enter into the sphere of our ideas which have no other reason for being than that of liberating them by means of revolution (it not having been possible up to the present time to do so by other means) from plutocratic tyranny which starves and incites them to fratricidal butchery?"

Before responding to such a question I assert my belief that the individualist régime of life, which you long for and defend, is possible. I believe it is possible, not because of a more or less doctrinaire pretension, but because most men — if not all, certainly a large part of them — have already touched the point of moral purity sufficient to bring about the aforesaid régime from the theoretic to the practical stage. I have no need to search among the dead generations for proof of this assertion. It suffices for me to look only among the living, and not farther than my native land, to find the corroborative proof of my belief and affirmation. Roberto Ardigò, Pasquale Villari, Theodore Moneta, Guglielmo Marconi. Who would presume to say that these men, and others such as these or even of lesser intellectual qualities would have need of any sort of political, judicial, military, economic or religious authority to live among themselves in perfect peace and harmony?

Beside this, there are an infinite number of private business associations (without speaking of tribes falsely called savage) which are satisfactorily regulated by laws not written in any code; by laws which have no substantial authority other than that which each person feels within himself and obeys in his relation to others.

He who admits the law of evolution must honestly admit individualism.

Because the law of evolution, morally speaking, implies nothing else than the study of human virtues; while individualism is nothing more than the exercise of human virtues.

Evolution is nothing more than the theory of civil life; individualism is nothing more than the practice of human life.

Individualism — so far as it represents the degree of

moral perfection already attained by man and according to which he feels himself disposed to deal uprightly with his fellow man and even capable of this — is the supreme ideal of evolution, or I might say, is the complement of evolution, did I not know that evolution as a synonym of progress is infinite and therefore cannot have a complement, at least in the absolute sense.

After making this declaration in honor of the truth, Absolute Neutrals, let me say: the people do not enter within the radius of your ideas because they have not yet arrived at the intellectual heights necessary to comprehend the sublimity of the goal to which you wish to attain. And there are others who have reached such heights, but who do not wish to engage in a revolution, because of a repugnance for a means so violent and sanguinary; and more than this, such methods have never brought, as history teaches, substantial results proportionate to the efforts and sacrifices made by revolutionists. Such methods have never destroyed as they should have, and they have not even arrested the sturdy and arrogant vitality of plutocracies which incarnate all of the evils of society.

But because the people have not yet reached the necessary intellectual height, and because they will not engage in revolutions, do you believe, you Absolute Neutrals, that you have the right to leave them to themselves during a war, or to leave them in the power of the more astute, of the stronger, of the more malicious?

To tell the truth, such a vindictive plan, however negative it may be, is not compatible, *a priori*, with your principles of universal brotherhood. It is unworthy of your civil apostolate. Especially if one considers that you, outside of war (one means military war), do not hesitate to break the rigidity of your absolute neutrality — which should be invulnerable — by descending in the field to fight battles which are of a strictly economic character; battles which are not favorable to your individualistic theories. I am speaking of partial strikes. Why should one discuss general strikes, national or international, if, from the day that class struggle enters into a practical phase, strikes of

every category are only made by rhetorical and high sounding phrases?

You Absolute Neutrals have gone far afield, into absolutely hostile camps, to defend openly and energetically the rights of those who strike against the cruel greed of plutocracy, the competition of scabs, the violence of gunmen.

However, those who strike do not comprise all of the proletariat, but are only a small part of them (the privileged part, a sort of caste), the part which is the antithesis of your ideas.

Because, according to the idealistic contents of the doctrines which you say you profess, you work toward the entire amelioration of all oppressed peoples without distinction (there are hundreds of millions outside of the unions); while the unionists who strike, work only to their own exclusive material amelioration.

You are working toward the destruction of plutocracies since you are justly convinced that on such destruction depends the solution of the entire social question. The unionists instead, as soon as they have attained the material betterment for which they struck, are quieted as was the famous Cerberus of Dante:

> Cerberus, a cruel beast and strangely made,
> Barks out of his three dog-like throats
> At those who were there submerged.
> . . . . . .
> When Cerberus, the great worm, saw us
> He opened his mouth and showed his tusks
> And quivered in every limb.
> My guide[1] . . . . took up earth: and with full
> Fists cast it into his ravening gullets.
> As the dog that barking craves and
> Grows quiet when he bites his food, for he
> Strains and battles only to devour it, so did
> Those squalid visages of Cerberus, the
> Demon, who thundered on the spirits so they would
> Fain be deaf.[2]

[1] Virgil.

[2] The epicures and gluttons of the Third Circle. *Divine Comedy*, Inferno, Canto VI ("Temple Classics").

And when the unionists believe themselves to be well paid, they no longer fight the plutocrats. They recognize the legitimate existence of the plutocrats; they make them more solid; they fatten them more and more. They even come to a point where they admire, magnify, and idolize them. One can see this in a thousand cases. For the sake of brevity I will cite only two which are truly typical. One case, proving my first affirmation — that the unionists are selfishly quieted, after they have obtained the raise of wages for which they have struck; the second case proving my second affirmation that the unionists, when they believe themselves well paid, recognize even indirectly the legitimate existence of the plutocracy, and fatten the plutocrats more and more even though they do so involuntarily; they admire, they magnify, and they even idolize them hypocritically.

The first case: The unionists who work in the great clothing factory of Hart, Schaffner & Marx, of Chicago, Illinois, one day struck to obtain a raise of wages. Hart, Schaffner & Marx raised the pay, according to the demands of the strikers. These returned to their work satisfied. From that moment one saw no more life among them, they did not move again, not even when their unionist brothers (the other tailors of Chicago) were reduced to the most miserable economic condition and struck solidly and fought desperately for weeks to obtain for themselves a raise of wages from the other local manufacturers.[1]

The second case: The employees of the automobile manufacturer, Henry Ford, of Detroit, Michigan, believe that they are well paid. But this fact does not prevent this good man from annually accumulating millions and millions of dollars for his own benefit from the work for which the laborers believe (bless them!) that the munificent plutocrat has paid them so well.

And besides this, the unionists do not even in the final count obtain for themselves the benefits for which they have struck.

[1] During the tailors' strike of Chicago in 1915 it was shown that some women workers did not receive more than $1.75 per week. Of this amount they were obliged to use daily ten cents for carfare to go and return from work.

When the plutocrats accede to their demands by augmenting the pay of the strikers, the latter believe that they have won. But this is simply an illusion. The truth is very different. And it is the plutocrats who lose nothing. That which they give with one hand, they take with the other hand; they even retake double or more. (The plutocrats, know arithmetic very well; intellectually speaking they know little besides arithmetic.)

An example: the miners struck for a raise of wages. The employers acceded to the demands and increased their pay. But they afterward sold the coal to the same employees with an increase of price, corresponding to or more than making up the raise of wage which the strike had obliged them to yield. Without considering that such raise of wages, which were wisely transformed by the plutocrats into a raise in price, falls on the shoulders also of unionists of the other categories of workers who have not struck; it falls also on the shoulders of the workmen who cannot or will not join the unions; it falls therefore on the shoulders of that eternal, useful, patient, and beaten ass: the people.

And who suffers the other inconveniences which are born out of strikes? Certainly not the plutocrats; instead, it is the just who suffer for the unjust. In the Chicago tailors' strike of 1915, of which we have made mention for example, I personally knew many who at the beginning of the strike were without a penny in their pockets. These poor creatures, during the long weeks of the strike, did not receive one cent of assistance from the union of which they were a part; thus they and their families suffered from hunger; while the plutocrats (the employers who resisted the strike) did not miss their Lucullan meals any more than before the strike. It is true that a certain sum (a few thousand dollars) was collected at that time, but such alms (coming in great part from private individuals, certainly not from the proletariat, and I do not know with what conscience and dignity it was accepted by the strike leaders) was unequal to the needs of the strikers, partly because it was unequally distributed, not to say worse.

Now if you, Absolute Neutrals, take an active part in

partial strikes to aid unionists who are substantially none other than the privileged minority of the proletariat, as plutocracy is none other than the privileged minority of the bourgeoisie, with much more reason should you take an active part in the war, which is made to aid the weaker nations to free themselves from the cupidity of the stronger; in wars which are much nearer to revolutions than strikes, especially if one considers that only theoretically do you combat the unions, while you defend the weaker nations. You theoretically fight against unionist laborers, but practically you aid them in their strikes against their oppressors. In fact, you preach one thing and you practice another.

How much this system has damaged your cause you yourselves can well imagine, especially if you consider that by aiding the unionists in a strike you do not destroy the positive forces of the plutocracy, but instead, you augment and perpetuate them; while aiding the weaker nations in war you destroy the positive forces of plutocracies; or if you do not destroy them, you begin to destroy them, which amounts to the same thing.

The groups which, inspired by the individualistic doctrines, are hoping to reach their goal by means of partial strikes, are like those who grind water in a mortar; the groups which obstinately remain in a verbose and virulent inertia during such a war as that of Europe — a war which opens a new historical epoch — are groups which are not in touch with life, are against life, and in consequence against humanity which loves life, against humanity which is life.

They will be struck by the fatal law of elimination because of their own fault. They will perish.

Absolute Neutrals, meditate upon these truths!

The Italian people believed that the theory of conditional neutrality (war only for national defense) and the theory of absolute neutrality (peace at any price) if put into practice would have driven humanity back into the primitive chaos of barbarism where nothing but brute force reigned; would have trampled under foot the foundation of every idea of justice and civilization.

Because the tyrants, always thirsting for more riches and dominion, commit at their pleasure any sort of crime, secure of immunity. Who indeed could punish them if the people of the nations who are not implicated in wars (wars incited by the stronger nation which is in the wrong, against the weaker nation which is in the right), did not combine solidly and practically with this latter?

Non-intervention before an evil is committed, and the cry of peace after the evil is committed, would be a fine comedy for crowned and uncrowned villains.

In such way the mine owner could very well, for example, have his striking miners, with wives and children, killed by his gunmen; then he could demand peace and all would be happily ended. Exactly as a certain religion which says to man: "Commit any sin which you wish; afterward present yourself at the feet of your confessor whom I keep at your disposal, and all will be pardoned you in the name of the God whom I represent."

What a *festa!* What a game!

The splendid example of practical human solidarity given by the Italian people, imposing on their own government armed intervention in the great war in defense of the weaker nations which were assaulted by the stronger, might be pondered upon and imitated by other peoples.

This example shows in a solemn manner how it may be possible, even easy, to bring about the spiritual alliance of the people, provided that the Conditional Neutrals and the Absolute Neutrals recognize their error.

Certain it is that the spiritual alliance of a people will not destroy military influence in twenty-four hours, but by strengthening, holding back skillfully and energetically these forces against the plutocracy which owns them, the spiritual alliance of the people would be able immediately to put an end to war.

Do not in heaven's name repeat the old *ritornello:* "This war will be the last. This war will signal the end of militarism. After this war we shall have permanent universal peace," etc.

I conclude.

As long as there are national industrial plutocracies with their related commercial competitions between nations, there will be militarism and there will be war.

Because militarism (I speak of the militarism of today) is none other than an organism created and maintained by plutocracies to defend the infinite interests of plutocracies, the infinite increase of plutocracies.

Plutocracies are the cause. Militarism is the effect. Can one destroy the effect without first destroying the cause?

And can one prevent war only by preaching peace and continuing to kneel at the feet of potentates?

War has existed since man existed.

Peace has been preached since war existed.

But the preaching of peace has never been able to prevent war, because war is a material fact, is action, while the preaching of peace is an immaterial fact; nothing but words.

If the preaching of peace could have prevented war, it would have done so from the first day or during the centuries in which peace has opposed itself to war.

And we cannot wait until the potentates themselves prevent it, because war is the life of potentates. And the potentates are not so tender, nor even so foolish as to sacrifice their own lives for the love of peace.

War will be prevented only when the preaching of peace shall be transformed into a spiritual alliance of the peoples; only when it shall transform itself into the armed intervention of a people (allied spiritually among themselves) in defense of the weaker nation which is in the right, and which has been assaulted by the stronger nations which are in the wrong.

Only then the pure blood of the youth of Italy, and of the whole world, spilled in rivers on the fields of Europe for the past three years, can seriously prelude universal peace so longed for by humanity, and a lasting universal peace which is so necessary to humanity.

VIII

The betrayal.

Wherein was the treachery that the Italian people committed against Austria-Hungary and Germany by breaking the treaty of the triple alliance and entering into war in behalf of Serbia, Belgium, France, England, and Russia?

First of all, the legend must be destroyed that the monarchical Government of Savoy is a constitutional one; that the king is nothing, or less than nothing; that the representatives of the people (the deputies of the national parliament) are everything.

The monarchical Government of Savoy is, if not in name, certainly in fact, a government absolute and despotic. The King is everything. And the representatives of the government are mere figures.

The King of Italy by virtue of the Statute (that is, the fundamental law of the State which is today that same law promulgated by Carlo Alberto on March 4, 1848) has the right to direct personally — or by means of his ministers, which is the same thing [1] — all foreign policies of the nation.[2]

Such right the Kings of Savoy have known only too well how to use; and the present King, Victor Emanuel III, in spite of his court-followers and courtiers who always extol him as the most democratic sovereign in the world, has made unlimited use of it.

Victor Emanuel III in 1912 renewed the treaty of the alliance with Austria and Germany for another twelve years, without in any way consulting the deputies of the national parliament elected by the people; without their consent;

[1] Article LXV of the Statutes says: "The King nominates and dismisses his ministers."

[2] Article V of the Statute says: "To the King alone belongs the executive power. He is the Supreme Head of the State; he commands all of the forces of land and sea; declares war; makes all treaties of peace, of alliance, of commerce, and others, giving notice of them to the cabinet as soon as the interest and the security of the State permits, or when it seems opportune. The treaties which might bring honor to the finances of the State or increase its territory would not be valid without the consent of the cabinet."

against the will of the people; even against the interests of the nation itself.

Victor Emanuel III declared and directed the colonial war of 1911–1912 against Turkey without at all consulting the deputies of the National Parliament elected by the people; without their consent; against the will of the people. And only at the conclusion of peace did Victor Emanuel III deign to announce to the representatives of the people, that is, to the people, that Libya (Tripoli and Cyrenaica) was conquered, and, by royal decree, proclaimed a province of the realm.

And not only the foreign policy but the internal policies of the nation are personally directed by the King of Italy.

It is true that the honorable representatives of the people discuss and approve the laws of the nation. But such laws cannot be put in action, if first they are not discussed and approved by the Senate and sanctioned by the King himself.[1]

What is the Senate? The Senate, in Italy, is none other than the direct representative of the King. The senators in fact are not elected by the people. They are nominated by the King, and nominated for life, from men proved liege and faithful to the crown, from ex-monarchical deputies, ministers of State, ambassadors, magistrates, generals, admirals, high administrative functionaries and plutocrats. A small minority is named by the King, and not without caution, from the most conspicuous intellectual figures of the nation.[2] But this minority almost never takes part in

[1] Article VII of the Statute says: "The king only can sanction and promulgate the laws."

[2] Article XXXIII of the Statute says: "The Senate is composed of members who are nominated for life by the King — these are not limited in number — and who have completed forty years of age, and they are chosen from among the following lists:

1. The Archbishops and Bishops of the State;
2. The President of the Chamber of Deputies;
3. The Deputies after three terms, or six years of office;
4. The Ministers of State;
5. The Secretaries of State;
6. The Ambassadors;
7. The Envoys Extraordinary; after three years of office;

the sittings and deliberations of the senate; it rarely interests itself in the active policy of the nation. It is a passive minority, nominated by the King to throw dust in the eyes of the people more than for anything else.

It will be objected "that divergencies never arise among the deputies elected by the people, and the senators nominated by the King; that there never have been incompatibilities between the parliamentary institutes represented by the one or the other; that the Senate has always approved the laws discussed and voted by the Chamber of deputies."

It is true. But why?

Because the majority of the deputies is composed, as is the majority of the senators, of men proved liege and faithful to the crown. It is also a majority nominated by the King.

And why are they nominated by the King?

I will tell you immediately: for the benefit of court followers and sycophants who obstinately picture and extol

8. The First President, and Presidents of the Supreme Court, and of the Treasury;
9. The First Presidents of the Court of Appeals;
10. The Attorney General of the Supreme Court, and of the Treasury, after five years of office;
11. The Presidents of divisions of the Court of Appeals, after three years of service;
12. The Councillors of the Supreme Court and the Treasury, after five years of office;
13. The General Attorneys of the Court of Appeals, after five years of office;
14. Generals of land and sea, but the Major-Generals and the Rear-Admirals must have had five years in that rank of active service;
15. The Councillors of State, after five years of office;
16. The members of Councils of Divisions, after having had three elections to their presidency.
17. General Superintendents of Finance, after seven years of office;
18. The members of the Royal Academy of Science, after seven years of office;
19. The ordinary Members of the Supreme Council of Public Instruction, after seven years of office;
20. Those who by high service or merit have honored the Patria;
21. The persons who for three years continuously have paid 3,000 lire of direct tax in proportion to their goods or their business.

Article XXXIV of the Statute says: "The Princes of the Royal Family take part with full rights in the Senate. They are seated directly after the President. They enter the Senate at twenty-one years of age, and have their vote at twenty-five years of age."

Article XXXV says: "The President and the Vice-Presidents of the Senate are nominated by the king."

the Italian Chamber of deputies as a direct and authentic representative of the Italian people.

In the political elections — in the elections, that is, of the deputies of the national parliament — the Italian Government always presents, in almost all of the 508 electoral colleges of the realm, its monarchical candidates in opposition to the anti-monarchical candidates, or those who are not sufficiently monarchical.

To have such candidates elected, the Italian Government feverishly puts into action all of the police officers of the State (from the highest to the lowest). And through them the Government causes to be lavishly spent among the electoral masses the millions of lire of the so-called secret funds drawn from the veins of the tax-payers (that is, from the veins of the people); it causes extravagant promises of employments and favors to be made; in fact it corrupts without scruple. And where it cannot corrupt it threatens to use every sort of violence and abuse of power. In one of the last general political elections, for example, Giovanni Giolitti, then president of the ministry and minister of the interior, even sent battleships to Sicily to intimidate (and not only to intimidate!) with cannons of great caliber those electors who had shown themselves but little disposed to vote for the candidate of the Government.

Now can a cabinet elected by a system of government so arbitrary, dishonest and infamous, call itself, in good conscience, a true representative of the people? Is it not rather — except the small minority representing the opposing electors which the Government in a manner overrules — a representative (even though indirect) of the King? Can it *never* elect a majority which will some time find itself in serious disaccord with the Senate?

As soon as the great war broke out in 1914, Victor Emanuel III — who could not personally put himself forward for reasons easy to understand — in furious haste called the Italian politicians who were most devoted to him (Giolitti the chief of all, as being the most astute and influential) and commanded them to bestir themselves, to do everything possible to create in the nation a favorable

current toward the central empires; to induce the Italian people to respect the Triple Alliance, to enter without delay into the war on the side of Austria and Germany.

The Italian people were ignorant of the contents of the treaty of the Triple Alliance because the King had never considered it his duty to communicate it to them, but because of its having been published by the press they were aware that the treaty contained a basic defensive clause.

Then why did the King wish that Italy should enter the field in the defense of Austria and Germany in an offensive war?

The Italian people wished to see clearly this matter. And they knew that Victor Emanuel III wanted the intervention of Italy at any cost in the European war on the side of Austria and Germany for the following reasons:

First: From the standpoint of dynastic solidarity toward the Hohenzollerns. This dynasty was considered, at least until the breaking out of the great war, as the prototype of the imperial militaristic dynasties of the world, because on January 18, 1871, it founded the German Empire and because it gave an incomparable impulse, power and solidity to that empire. The dynasty of Savoy, itself imperialistically military, could not but feel itself attracted toward its *consorella* prototype. Like seeks its like. It could not do other than feel the need of imitating it. The English dynasty of Brunswick and the Russian dynasty of Romanoff, on the other hand, were too tightly bound to republican France.

Second: Because the House of Savoy was, and is, related to the reigning Houses of Austria and Germany. In fact, Victor Emanuel II, first King of Italy, grandfather of the present Victor Emanuel III, married Maria Adelaide, daughter of Giuseppe Ranieri, Archduke of Austria and Austrian viceroy of Lombardo-Veneto from 1818 to 1848. And this same Archduke Ranieri, in 1820, married Elizabeth of Savoy-Carignano, sister of Carlo Alberto. The present Queen Margherita, widow of the second King of Italy, Humbert I, and mother of the present King, was a daughter of Princess Elizabeth who was a daughter of King

John of Saxony. Prince Thomas,[1] brother of Queen Margherita, uncle of the present King Victor Emanuel III, married Maria Isabel, daughter of Prince Adalbert of Bavaria.

THIRD: For personal friendship toward the Kaiser. The intimate relations which exist between Emperor William II and the parents of the present King Victor Emanuel III and between this same William II and this same Victor Emanuel III is well known in Italy and in all Europe.

FOURTH: For personal financial interests. The American journals and also some newspapers of Italy published the assertion that the present King Victor Emanuel III had invested more than 100,000,000 lire of his private funds in the German Krupp Manufacturing Company, in the manufactory that produces thousands of guns a year, as well as caldrons, armored cars, locomotives and electric motors; in the manufactory which owns arsenals, steamships, iron mines and coal.

FIFTH: For sympathy toward the German people. Many Italians have always felt and still feel a sympathy for the German people. Why should not Victor Emanuel III have felt this? Is he not a man subject to sentiments and passions as are all others?

SIXTH: Because Victor Emanuel III believed that intervention in the great war at the side of Austria and Germany would have been of advantage to the nation. Many private Italian citizens believed and still believe the same. Why should Victor Emanuel himself not have believed it? Does he not enjoy the rights which other Italian citizens enjoy?

SEVENTH: On account of some secret treaty stipulated between Victor Emanuel III, William II and Francis Joseph, with which treaty the sovereigns obligated themselves to help each other militarily even in case of an offensive war. That such an agreement was made, one logically infers from the fact that Emperor William, however conscious of the German military power, however ambitious, audacious or insane, would never have encouraged Francis

[1] Prince Thomas is at present the lieutenant of Victor Emanuel III that is, Viceroy of Italy.

Joseph to provoke this most dangerous of wars (dangerous to Germany itself) if he had not been more than sure of the unconditional and unlimited aid of Italy. Francis Joseph himself—even had he been senilely obstinate—would never have been so opposed to little Serbia.

Giolitti — who was indebted for fifteen years of government dictatorship to the House of Savoy — obeyed the command of his King, and, followed by his satellites, began his work. He ran through and through (with mysterious circumspection, more by night than by day) all of the streets of the capital, running up and down stairs, confabulating with the most equivocal figures, both indigenous and foreign. Even though he sweated dozens of shirts, his influence and astuteness, however much sustained by the personal authority of the Sovereign, was of too corrupt a sort and was too well known. And, therefore, it did not have the effect which their highnesses wished. Instead it had an absolutely contrary effect. In fact, the people of the new Italy — in a referendum taken by the government among the soldiers of sea and land — said proudly but firmly that they would not fight for Germany and Austria and especially for Austria, not even if commanded by God in person. Not only that, but they imposed on the King the breaking of the treaty of the alliance with the above two nations and they also imposed the declaration of neutrality of Italy in the war; then they began to manifest openly and strongly their sympathy for the nations assaulted by the armies of Francis Joseph and the Kaiser.

Victor Emanuel III recognized, with an uneasy mind, the impossibility of intervention in the war in favor of Germany and Austria and he again called upon Giolitti; he ordered him to lose no time; to stir things up and do his best to induce the people of the new Italy at least to maintain their neutrality and not to abandon themselves to exaggerated and harmful sentimentality.

Giolitti — who was indebted for fifteen years for his dictatorship to the House of Savoy — obeyed the commands of his King. And, followed by his satellites, he plunged

himself with more zeal, if not with more confidence, into the work. Believing himself sure of immunity, he planned dark intrigues and forced himself to commit acts more than illicit.

But with the passing of the days, the Italian people saw that little Serbia was crushed; saw that little Belgium was crushed; saw that republican France was also on the point of being crushed; saw that England and Russia were also running into danger of being crushed; saw that all Europe might fall into slavery at the feet of the plutocratic Teutonic militarism. And then the people of Italy demanded of the King's Government the armed intervention of Italy in the war against the aggressive tyrants.

Victor Emanuel III, realizing, with a soul full of bitterness, the impossibility of maintaining the neutrality of Italy for any length of time, again called Giolitti and commanded him to move himself and stir things up and do everything that the desperation of the moment called for, to curb the bellicose ardor of the Italian people.

Giolitti — who was indebted to the house of Savoy for fifteen years' dictatorship — obeyed the commands of his King. And, followed by his satellites, he precipitated himself headlong another time into the underworld of diplomacy. There, creeping with a vileness without parallel, he began with the famous *pour parler* with Prince von Bülow, which very soon became the lynch pin of the treaties which the government of Vienna (under the auspices of William II) had already initiated with the government of Rome, with the object in view of buying the permanent neutrality of Italy by means of territorial concessions and millions of lire.[1]

[1]The personal responsibility of Victor Emanuel III for the false steps taken by Giolitti is clearly shown by the facts that have now passed into history, facts that nothing can destroy.

One must be logical, and above all the Italian people if they wish to be really respected must accustom themselves to call black *black*, and white *white* in questions of national interests. They must once and for all free themselves from the prejudice legalized by Article IV of the Statuto Albertino which says: "The person of the King is sacred and inviolable."

Giolitti, however, short-sighted as he had become politically, could not act as he did on his own account at the moment when the new Italy was preparing to take a great step forward in the life of the world.

Giolitti, as a private citizen, as minister, as prime minister, was always a

Thus one passes on to the last days of April, 1915.

Very early in May, 1915, Gabriele d'Annunzio returned from his exile in France.

The poet followed with Dantesque, Foscolian, Mazzinian anxiety the unfolding of events in Italy; he ranged himself on the side of the people, and faced with extraordinary courage, resoluteness, and energy the internal and external enemies of his Patria (procurers, barterers, and similar scum). He unmasked and lashed them till the blood ran.

Then from millions of breasts there burst volcanically the cry for war.

Victor Emanuel III trembled.

He understood that his great historic hour had struck. His throne rocked under his feet. An outside neutralistic resistance would hopelessly have ruined him.

On the morning of May 23, 1915, he declared war on Francis Joseph of Austria through his ambassador at Vienna, the Duke of Avarna.

Thus Italy entered into the great butchery.

But the Italian people by such an act committed no treachery.

The people of Italy imposed the breaking of the treaty

strenuous defender of Italy's militaristic and monarchic policy. How could he with sincerity suddenly begin to work for peace?

Giolitti was always with the parliamentary and popular majorities, even when they were in the wrong. How could he suddenly pass to the side of the minorities, and to the side of the socialist minority against whom he had always struggled and by whom he was always combated in the bitterest manner? How could he, master opportunist that he was, set himself against the current?

Giolitti as a statesman of the most mediocre caliber, had reached the apex of political greatness in Italy (the presidency of the ministry). And he was maintained there longer than any other statesman. On the eve of the entrance of Italy into the war he was as yet the supreme arbiter of the Italian National Parliament and of Italian political life. Why should he risk such a position, when the risk, even if it should redound to his benefit, could never give him any higher position?

Giolitti, during his permanency with the government, came out with a financial position more than solid. He could, therefore, with the greatest ease, continue to amass wealth without being observed very closely by the people. Why should he almost publicly sell himself like any common beggar to the agents of Austria and Germany when such a sale would bring about — and he knew this — his complete moral ruin?

Giolitti as the perfect servant could do nothing but sacrifice himself to his master who had so greatly benefited him. He preferred to filthily close his already vile political life, rather than in a moment of greatest trial commit an act of ingratitude toward his King, rather than compromise "the sacred person of his King."

This is the truth.

of the Triple Alliance because it was not stipulated nor approved by them.

It may be objected "that a people who were governed by a king and a statute should of necessity respect the acts which the king executed on the basis of such a statute."

It is true. But one must also consider that when the people of the New Italy demanded the rupture of the treaty of the Triple Alliance stipulated by the king and operating in opposition to that which the treaty itself established, they demonstrated clearly that they no longer intended to follow the old and beaten paths. (This is in itself I believe, a symptom of political importance.) Their action showed that the people of the New Italy were only disposed to respect the King and the statute when both interpreted the needs and will of the nation not when they revealed themselves, especially at the most solemn and decisive moment of the Patria, opposed to the sentiments and the national interests of the people themselves; contrary to their human ideals.

On the other hand, neither did Victor Emanuel III in the final count commit a real treason by breaking the treaty of the triple alliance and declaring war on Austria, for the simple reason that when he made the contract of the treaty itself, he could not absolutely foresee that the shield of the Italian people would be raised.

Victor Emanuel III when he agreed to the treaty of the Triple Alliance, was sure, as were his colleagues, Francis Joseph and William II, especially William II, that the people of the New Italy would blindly follow the will of their King, as they had done in the past.

Instead the people of the New Italy who had always respected and blindly executed the will of their King, refused to respect and execute it at the onset of the European war.

But Victor Emanuel III, as we have seen, did not fail to do his best to demand the old obedience of his people. As soon as the great war burst out in 1914, he delayed the obligation assumed by him toward Francis Joseph and William II. He forced his faithful Giolitti and satellites to spread the idea that if the Italian people would avoid lasting shame, they must respect the treaties by entering the field

of battle on the side of the two allied nations, Austria and Germany. The people of the New Italy, including the soldiers to whom the referendum was made, replied that they would never take up arms in defense of the two above-named nations, especially Austria. And they then imposed neutrality.

Victor Emanuel III did everything in his power at least to maintain neutrality. Then the people of the New Italy realized that their neutrality would secure victory equally to the two aggressive emperors who were allied to the Sultan of Turkey (another enemy of Italy and of civilization) and they clamored for armed intervention in favor of the allied nations.

Victor Emanuel III made desperate efforts to avoid the supreme misfortune of intervention. The people of the New Italy showed their teeth.

Victor Emanuel III then felt that his crown was in danger. He had to bend. He had to obey. He had to declare war against Austria.

How could he do otherwise?

For the first time he found himself before a people suddenly reawakened from the shameful lethargy in which they had been thrown for so long a time; that is, from the time that Italy had become a united and independent nation. He found himself confronted by a people who had suddenly discovered the consciousness of their own material force and their moral dignity. He found himself confronted by a people who were on the point of starting a revolution that might turn the monarchy upside down and proclaim Italy a republic, if he, the King, failed to obey orders at the roll of the drum — orders, I say, which the people themselves gave to him. He found himself confronted by a people transformed from bleating sheep, ready to lick the hand which was armed for their destruction, into fierce and roaring lions ready to advance and mete out summary justice upon those who had taken advantage of their patience and lethargy.

How could Victor Emanuel III have foreseen all of this ire of the gods? Could he have foreseen, when the alliance

with Francis Joseph and William II was formed, that the people of the New Italy — who had always shown themselves docile and resigned to the House of Savoy—would one day rise up powerfully against this same dynasty?

Victor Emanuel III could not have foreseen so extraordinary a fact, for the simple reason that, with all of the superior intelligence which the court followers and sycophants attributed to him, he had not yet succeeded in fathoming the souls of his people. Had he been able thus to fathom them, he would easily have understood that the people of the New Italy had tolerated the treaty of the Triple Alliance up to a certain point, but that they could not longer tolerate it when it menaced the nation and humanity with grave harm.

It was one of those cases of *force majeure* justified by all of the judicial laws of the world, including those which are in force in the very states of their royal and imperial majesties of Germany and Austria.

Therefore, there was no treachery, either on the part of the Italian people or on the part of Victor Emanuel III, King of Italy.

IX

English and French gold.

Where was the corrupting English gold?

Where was the corrupting French gold?

There doubtless was gold, but from the German and not from the English and French people. Prince von Bülow, representing the governments of Berlin and Vienna, when he was in Rome in May, 1915, scattered gold in Italy with a lavish hand. But he could do nothing but corrupt certain renegade politicians, some hungry scribblers, some hardened jailbirds.

Gabriele d'Annunzio cried this aloud in his fierce public accusations at that time.

Speaking to the people of Genoa on the evening of his return (May 4, 1915) the poet said, among other things:

What will you, Genovese? What will you, Italians? Will you have your nation diminish or grow?

You want a greater Italy, not by means of bribery, but by conquest; not by shameful measures, but at the price of blood and glory.

Haranguing the crowds in the streets of Rome on the evening of May 12, 1915, the poet said:

Now, as fifty years ago on this evening, at this same hour *The Thousand* stopped on their march from Marsala toward Salemi; and at the feet of their stacked bayonets sleepily ate their bread and in silence laid themselves down.

They had in their hearts the stars, and the words of their chief, which even today are a living and impelling force to us also: *If we will be united, our undertaking will be easy. Therefore, to arms!*

It was the proclamation at Marsala; and it says again with rude menace: *Who does not arm himself is a coward or a traitor.*

Would not the Liberator stamp with the same mark, if he could descend from the Janiculum to the low places of earth, and would he not thus stigmatize all those who today openly or secretly work to disarm Italy and put to shame the Patria and throw her again into a servile condition and nail her again to the cross?

O strength and scorn of Rome, overturn the tables of barterers and falsifiers!

Root out, O Romans, all the foulness, return to the sewer all such putridity!

Exhorting the Romans (May 13, 1915) the poet among other things said:

Companions, you must not permit that a handful of ruffians and defrauders shall be able to defame and ruin Italy for us.

The treachery is manifest today. We not only breathe its horrible stench, but we feel all of its opprobrious weight. In your Rome the attempt has been made to strangle the Patria with a Prussian halter.

We are on the point of being sold like a flock of sheep.

This meddler of Dronéro[1], this obscene intriguer wants to do this for us. This, that other licker[2] of dirty Prussian feet would do to us. This would their *canaille* of followers do to us.

This they will not do, O Romans!

[1] Electoral political college of Giolitti.
[2] Ex-minister Bertolini?

Your history, perhaps it was made in rag shops or pawn shops? Perhaps the scales of your justice balanced on the side where was placed a morsel of bread to chew, or a bone to gnaw? Your Campidoglio was perhaps a gambling table for barterers and defrauders? Glory perhaps was occupied in selling and gossiping in such a place, like a small huckster?

Not bones, not crumbs, not rags, not barterings, not frauds. Enough! Overthrow the tables! Break the false scales!

Our destinies cannot be measured by the yardstick of merchantmen, but by the longsword.

And with sticks and slaps in the face, kicks and blows, we should greet the accomplices and mediators, the lick-platters and lick-spittles of the former German ex-chancellor [von Bülow] who on a Roman hill made of himself a fat Jove, transforming himself now into a tender bull, now into a rain of gold.

It must not be permitted that the slaying of the Patria shall be consummated in Rome. You Romans must give to me this security.

Hurling public accusation at a mass meeting of the Romans on the evening of May 14, 1915, the poet among other things said:

The Patria is in danger, the Patria is on the point of being lost. To save it from irreparable ruin and ignominy each one of us must give all of himself and arm himself with all sorts of weapons.

In a message to the students at the Roman Athenaeum, assembled (May 15, 1915) to deliberate on violence against the traitors, the poet said:

Today is the anniversary of the most beautiful battle of the Garibaldians; it is the anniversary of Calatafimi. Of this the Chief usually said: *If at the point of death you should see me smile, friends, remember that it is the memory of Calatafimi which warms my heart to its last beat.*

But in order to make Garibaldi smile again, it will be necessary to celebrate this anniversary with the expulsion of the knave [Giolitti] who would sell Italy, and of the procurer [von Bülow] who would buy it. It will be necessary to purify the skies of Rome from these two infections.

The Italian people in their poverty, pure as the crystals

of the Alps, refused to enter into the vile barter of von Bülow and Giolitti.

And why should they not refuse, if they continually see themselves mirrored in the lives of men whom gold never could contaminate—of men who were representative of their ideals?

I will here recall two episodes, one an ancient one which is taught in all of the elementary schools in Italy, and the other an episode of modern times which the national press repeats every year. Both of these give an idea of the virtues on which the people of the New Italy fashion, with the admirable law of continuity, their own moral incorruptibility.

First episode: In the summer of 282 B. C., a Roman squadron, sailing toward Sena Gallica, cast anchor in the port of Tarentum. The Tarentines, under pretext of an ancient treaty, prohibited the Romans from navigating outside of the Lacinium Cape, assaulted the anchored ships, sent some to the bottom and drove the others away.

The Roman senate called immediately for adequate reparation from the Tarentines. But the ambassadors sent by the senate on this mission, instead of being given reparation, were basely outraged by the Tarentines. Then Rome declared war.

The Tarentines called to their aid Pyrrhus, King of Epirus. The latter, who was ambitious and very desirous of adventure, came without much urging. He landed at Tarentum (280 B. C.) with a great army, and twenty elephants carrying on their backs fortresses behind which the soldiers could fight with safety. They encountered the Romans, commanded by the consul P. Valerius Levinus at Heraclea, near the mouth of the river Aciris, and a sharp battle followed.

The Roman soldiers — frightened by the enormous size and by the bellowing of the quadrupeds — which they saw for the first time — fled, leaving the victory to the enemy. But this victory cost so dearly that Pyrrhus, full of marvel and scorn, exclaimed: "Another victory like this, and I should be obliged to return alone to Epirus."

During the winter, a Roman commission led by Caius Fabricius, a poor man but of great military talent and of noble spirit, presented itself to Pyrrhus to treat of an exchange of prisoners.

The austere simplicity of the Roman filled the strangers with wonder.

Pyrrhus called Fabricius apart, and offered him most precious gifts on condition that he would induce the Roman senate to make peace.

But Fabricius responded haughtily: "Offer your gifts to slaves, not to a Roman citizen. You should know that I do not feel myself poor, but richer than you, because my little farm and my humble home give me enough with which to live happily."

Not being able to conquer with gold, Pyrrhus attempted to conquer Fabricius with fear. At a given signal he incited one of his largest elephants against him, which extended his proboscis to the head of Fabricius and bellowed ferociously.

The strong and honest Roman did not tremble, did not move. He smiled proudly and scornfully. And when the elephant had ceased his roaring, Fabricius departed from the field without concluding anything regarding the exchange of prisoners.

Pyrrhus, stupified, exclaimed: "I see that it would be easier to make the sun deviate from its course than to turn Fabricius from the path of virtue!"

Fabricius returned to Rome and advised the senate not to make peace.

"Rome must not descend to pacts, until foreign soldiers shall have crushed the very soil of Italy."

The war continued. Pyrrhus was defeated by the Romans, commanded by the consul M. Curius Dentatus, in a bitter battle near Beneventum, and was forced to return to Epirus.

Second episode: In the year 1888 it was necessary for the Italian government to contract a debt of 60,000,000 lire. Some French bankers, desiring to conclude the business,— which was a large sum for that time,— attempted to corrupt one of the most austere and noble figures of the

Italian parliament, Giovanni Bovio,[1] offering him 1,200,000 lire. By means of the authority of that proud republican deputy, they hoped — indeed, felt certain — that they would be able to influence the Italian minister of Finance, Agostino Magliani. But this is how Bovio responded to the banker who had been entrusted by his colleagues of France to make the audacious proposal:

NAPLES, Dec. 5, 1888.

Sir: By registered letter from Paris dated December 1, 1888, on paper upon which your name is printed, you write to me: *I have had the honor of knowing and listening to you. Can you ask of Minister Magliani if it is true that the Italian government is in absolute need of a loan of 50 or 60,000,000 lire, and at what rate of interest it could be negotiated in France? If this is true you can assure the minister that if the rate of interest is satisfactory, in eight days from the day of the answer, the 50 or 60,000,000 lire of which he has need will be brought to Rome.*

As you see, this affair is most serious and requires the utmost discretion. For your inconvenience and trouble, if the affair shall be accomplished, there will be placed at your disposal the sum of 1,200,000 lire (un million deux cents mille francs).

The proposition which you have made me, clearly indicates that you have seen and heard me, but that you did not know me.

To make such a proposition to me you should have shown my name to the banker who will come to Rome.

Therefore permit me to defend my name, because I have nothing else to protect and to transmit.

I will defend it, explaining to you in a few words the fact and myself.

The fact, however colored and veiled, is that that which one calls business cannot be linked with deputies, ministers, nor with offices and companies dependent on the government. There is no law which would prevent this, but the worst evils are not those which are always punished by law.

[1] Giovanni Bovio of Trani, southern Italy, for many years republican deputy in the Italian National Parliament, orator, philosopher, epigraphist, dramatist, educator, was as conspicuous a figure as one of the ancient sages. He was born of poor parents and self-educated. He was in intimate correspondence with Mazzini, Saffi, Garibaldi,and others. As professor at the University of Naples he taught successively philosophy and the history of human rights, comparative public rights. He was an idealist, and followed Mazzinism in religion and politics. His philosophy was a mathematic naturalism, a great dream exalted by ideality. He died poor but uncorrupted. He was the author of profound works (1841–1903).

As for myself, neither you who came to Naples, nor others, can be ignorant of the fact that I support myself and family from day to day by teaching and writing philosophy, added to which is a little mathematics, but with arithmetic which has never arrived at a million.

Since my work gives me independence, the million would be superfluous.

You write that everything would be done quietly in Rome, without the knowledge of anyone.

But shouldn't I know it? Have I not a code in my conscience?

The bankers might leave their conscience at the foot of the Alps, and take it up on their return; but I carry mine everywhere, because inside of it there are the last ideals which I have been able to protect from delusions.

You write that this mediation is a work of a good citizen; but I say to you that it should be the work of an honest man never to do anything about which it is necessary to conceal or to keep quiet.

Now believe me because I have nothing to ask and nothing to accept: you will not meet an Italian who does not wish good relations between Italy and France, not for good *business* but for good reasons.

The Italian democracy is not rich; it loves the dignity and liberty of France; but it is not dazzled by French gold.

I and my friends will not mention your name, which is well known and esteemed here; but you must say to your companions that in Italy the sentiment of dignity is alive, and if a young Italian, educated by us, should have to choose between the Austrian hangman's rope and French gold, he without a second's hesitation would choose the rope.

GIOVANNI BOVIO.

The Italian people, by not entering into the intrigues of von Bülow and Giolitti, followed faithfully the examples of Fabricius and of Bovio. They did even more. They met the Honorable Bertolini, ex-minister of the monarchy of Victor Emanuel III, on the streets of Rome during the stormy days of May, 1915, and because he was suspected, simply suspected, of having sold himself to the Teutons, they assaulted him, throwing in his face handsful of money accompanied by burning vituperations.

They would have lynched Giolitti himself, if the old

"thick-lipped hangman" (thus d'Annunzio stigmatized him) had not taken to his heels and sought protection from the police.

The point is that the people of the New Italy are an intelligent, not a stupid people; are an idealistic people, not utilitarian; a tenacious people, not voluble. They know easily how to distinguish the true from the false, good from evil, beauty from ugliness. They quickly embrace all just causes by a natural impulse of their sensitive souls. And once they have embraced them, they defend them with enthusiasm, disinterestedness, and firmness.

When, in 1914, the great war broke out, the people of the New Italy knew immediately what it meant, and without hesitation spontaneously took the position which reason and sentiment, each inspired by the rights of the weaker, had imposed upon them. And in such a position they have always maintained themselves with love and unshaken constancy.

The gold of the English and the French was nothing other than a calumnious story cast abroad by Teutonic treachery.

One must consider a most essential circumstance, which is this: While, from July, 1914, to May, 1915, the struggle waged between those who were in favor of Austria and Germany (who later through force of circumstances became neutralists) on the one hand, and those who favored intervention against Austria on the other hand, several of the cheap and starving scribblers before mentioned were accused by Italian papers of having been bought by the Teutons. The accused brought complaint against their accusers for defamation. The trials were called before the tribunals. But in the public debate the accusing newspapers proved fully their accusations, which were that the penny-a-liners had been really bought by the Teutons. And the judges were obliged to absolve the accusing newspapers, while the scribblers accused of having sold themselves to the Teutons were buried under an avalanche of national indignation and scorn.

Was not this perhaps the most opportune psychological

moment to oppose the accusation and the proofs of Teutonic gold with accusations and proofs of English and French gold? It certainly was.

But the Teutons and their supporters did not profit by this. They were silent. And why?

Because English and French gold was not flowing into Italy. If it had flowed, the Teutons and their supporters would not have ceased to scream to the four winds about it.

On the other hand, English and French gold, if it had flowed, would only have corrupted, as had the Teuton gold, some of the renegade politicians, some starving scribblers, some hardened jail-birds. The Italian people in their poverty, pure as the crystal of the Alps, would have remained apart from the infamous traffic. They would once more be retempered in the solid virtues of their ancient Fabricius and their modern Bovio.

And not only with gold, but by other means the Teutons tried to force Italy to remain neutral as soon as they found themselves unable to drag her into the war at their side.

From July, 1914, to May, 1915, they inundated the peninsula with publications (journals, bulletins, magazines, handbills, books, pamphlets, *et similia*) in the Italian language, and by means of these precious documents, they tried to prove that the English and French had always hated and scorned the Italians and would always continue to do so, while they — the Teutons — had always been the most enthusiastic admirers and the sincerest friends of the Italians, and would always remain such in the future.

Numerous packages of such publications were sent to me directly to Chicago by a German friend, who in 1914 and 1915 was living in Italy. Thus I was able to read among others, the pamphlet entitled *The Truth About the Friendship of England for Italy*, by Dr. J. Lulvès, printed in Rome, 1915; the pamphlet entitled, *Italy and France*, by Alfredo Tusti, printed also in Rome in 1915; *The Bulletin of the War* (No. 30–31 of April 17–30, 1915) published by Dr. Fred B. Hardt, at Munich, Bavaria.

In the first I found chronologically enumerated the

wrongs which the English had inflicted upon the Italians from 1327 to 1912.

In the second I found chronologically enumerated the wrongs which the French had inflicted on the Italians from March 30, 1282 (date of the Sicilian Vespers), down to 1912.

In the third I found an article entitled, *Italian Culture and the German Spirit*, which I quote verbatim:

In Europe there is a spiritual solidarity which is opposed to the expression of Russian art and literature. We Germans admire the works of Dostoievsky, but the spirit of the Russian remains foreign to us; whereas Balzac makes us think and feel with him. A novel of Boccaccio makes us laugh heartily, and Dante's verses fill our souls with the same enthusiasm that the Italians themselves feel. Between the Romans and Germans there is an ancient bond of knowledge and memories by which Italian art and culture are thoroughly appreciated by us. For their inflow into our intellectual life we feel a deep sense of gratitude. The keen desire which pushed Goethe and the novelists to Italy still vibrates in every German heart. We will not repeat the history of the Roman colonization of Germany, but we will call to mind that from that period until today its influence has remained present all through history in the Roman Law.

The Renaissance has transmitted to us treasures of Greek and Latin thought. From the Italian Benedictine monasteries in the middle ages there was a strong religious and intellectual current toward Germany, and the earnest worship of the history of Italian arts, comparing it with the worship we attribute to other forms of culture, has always urged our best students of art and literature to their greatest activity in Italy. It would require too much space to quote the names of even the most important students whom Germany enumerates in these fields, but we will mention a few among the most celebrated. Who is not familiar with the name of Winckelmann, the founder of modern archæology? And who does not know the famous Theodore Mommsen and his history of Rome? Or the works of Friedländer and his history of Roman customs? The splendid History of the City of Rome in the middle ages by Ferdinand Gregorovius *the Roman citizen*? Ranke's masterpiece on the History of the Papacy? The work of Jacob Burkhardt, *Il Cicerone*, which gives a complete and comprehensive history of Italian art? The works of Hermann Grimm on the Renaissance,

and the great works of Wölfflin who now occupies a chair in the Riehl University of the Cathedral Riehl at Munich?

The Germans not only worked indefatigably and passionately to acquire the knowledge of Italian history, but they were also exceedingly interested in her poets and in the reproduction of their works. In the home of every good German is to be found "The Life of Benvenuto Cellini," which was translated for the first time by Goethe. Among the numerous translations of the *Divina Commedia* one which bears the pseudonym of Philalethes was written by King John of Saxony. The firm of E. Diederichs of Jena is publishing a rich collection of ancient Italian documents of the Renaissance which are splendidly translated; these are superb editions of which, up to the present time, two series of twelve volumes each have been issued. It is a pleasure for every cultured German to pick up one of these volumes such as *Matarazzo, La Cronaca di Perugia, Napoli e gli Aragonesi, il Diario Fiorentino di Landucci, il Diario di Roma di Infessura,* the Letters of Aretino and of Bracciolini, the *Mysteries of Florence, History of Florence,* by Machiavelli, and many other similar choice works.

The bibliographical editions, by G. Müller and von Weber of Munich, of the Italian poets and thinkers, published by the house of Insel in Leipzig, have a very large circulation in Germany. The incomparable translation of these works is followed by a very accurate criticism.

On the other hand, modern German painting was greatly influenced by Italian art, which is really the only great painting. It is sufficient in this connection to remember Albert Dürer's permanent residence in Venice. Even today the treasures gathered in the Art Museums of Italy are the dreams of young German artists who visit them, seeking and finding inspiration. And in how many of our courts of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries do we find the stamp and style of the genius of Italian artists and architects!

Modern Germany is not only interested in classical Italy and in the Italian Renaissance, but also in the reconstruction of its political unity, its economical development, which is watched with keen interest, and which is understood and highly appreciated by us, perhaps because we ourselves, like the Italians, recall the great struggles which they had to endure to reach their national unity. Victor Hehn, in his work, *Italian cities and People*, and P. D. Fischer, in his studies of the political, economical, and social conditions of Italy, as well as Hofmeister, in his work *The Economic*

Development of the Romans, have through most delicate analyses succeeded in penetrating the psychology of the Italian soul; and with what marvelous clearness they knew how to value and appreciate the high standard which Italy has known how to reach! And with what keenness did our great historian, Treitschke succeed in penetrating the work and genius of the great Italian statesman, Camillo Cavour!

Every year thousands and thousands of Germans visit the peninsula. They are fascinated by the magic beauties of nature and by the masterpieces which Italy possesses, and all go home after their too brief sojourn with their souls intoxicated by their impression of the extraordinary beauty of the country, and with hearts and souls overflowing with admiration for the wonderful beauties of classical Italy, and ears still vibrating with the harmonious echoes of conversations which may have incidentally occurred among agreeable traveling companions. Only the Germans, we dare to affirm it, carry out from Italy so many fruitful impressions of the land which fascinates them as the cradle of European civilization. The Frenchman does not travel much. The Englishman, however, does; but he returns with what entirely different observations and criticisms! The Russian who betakes himself to Italy is usually of the intelligent and more aristocratic type, but neither Italian art nor Italian civilization will ever be the common patrimony of the Russian people, whose psychology is foreign to European culture.

But the Italian people thought that English wrongs could not be so grave when confronted by German wrongs, if Giuseppe Mazzini (the foremost Italian of the New Italy) had finally grown fond of England.

The Italian people thought that the French wrongs were not unpardonable when confronted by Teuton wrongs, if Giuseppe Garibaldi (the glorious hero of the New Italy), Amilcare Cipriani (the most rebellious of the persecuted patriots of the New Italy), Giovanni Bovio, Felice Cavallotti, and Matteo Renato Imbriani (three of the most fearless patriots of the New Italy), and Giosuè Carducci and Gabriele d'Annunzio (the two greatest poets of the New Italy) had finally ended by defending and exalting France.

The Italian people, moreover, not having allowed them-

selves to be contaminated by German gold, were not beguiled by these tardy and flattering articles.

The Teutons finally resorted to threats, but in vain, for the simple reason that the Italian people, once roused for a reason which they believe to be just, fear nothing,— death least of all, as is clearly proved by the history of their martyrology.

X

Territorial cupidity.

Where was the territorial cupidity which incited the Italian people to enter the great war, attacking Austria?

Without doubt Italy, who took her place as a great power fifty years ago, found the most important positions of the world solidly occupied by other nations who had been powerful for centuries. She found an international hierarchy long established and ironclad in which there remained nothing for her but the last place. She found a rigid and suffocating equilibrium which she, smaller, poorer, and weaker than all the others could not shake, and from which she could not carve for herself the slightest portion of riches and dominion, nor could she reconstruct her full national, geographical, and ethnic unity.

Territorial expansion, however, was a vital incoercible necessity.

For notwithstanding that the people of the New Italy greatly respected the national independence of other peoples— they even respected those whom so-called civilizations openly call inferiors and barbarians—they were always opposed to the policy and enterprises which had for their aim territorial expansion. The people of the New Italy strongly opposed the war against Abyssinia for the conquest of Eritrea, which had for its epilogue the defeat of Adua, May 1, 1896; and, in 1911–1912, the war against Turkey for the conquest of Tripoli and Cyrenaica, (the only two wars of the New Italy) imposed by the monarchical Government of Savoy for the

banking, industrial, commercial, and religious interests of the Italian plutocracy. They opposed them, or rather did not *impose* them as they did the present great war, because those two African wars could only, up to a certain point, harm the compages and the destiny of the nation, while the great war is certain to harm the compages and destiny of all Europe and of the whole world.

The people of the New Italy, entering into the great war during the spring of 1915, did not have for their object territorial advantages.

If they had had only this object in view they would have drawn up in line of battle from the beginning of the war, on the side of Austria and Germany, or at least they would have remained neutral.

In the first case, France would have been crushed as quickly as a lightning flash. The French disaster would have unavoidably reacted upon England and Russia. And Austria and Germany, remaining victorious and absolute arbiters of the situation, would willingly have compensated Italy with territorial concessions, comprising not only the unredeemed regions at the east of the peninsula (from Trentino to the southern coast of Albania) but also the unredeemed regions at the west of the peninsula (as Savoy, Nice, and Corsica), the islands of Malta, Tunis, Gibraltar and, *dulcis in fundo*, some "great colony" outside of the Mediterranean.

In the second case, Austria and Germany, not less willingly whatever may be said to the contrary, would have compensated Italy with territorial concessions proportionate to these which would have come to them in the event of victory to Francis Joseph and William II.

But rather than easy acquirement of territory, the people of the New Italy preferred the cause of humanity, even at infinite sacrifice, above and beyond the value synthesized in the binomial Trent-Trieste. They preferred to destroy the dreams of Teutonic control and plutocratic supremacy. They preferred to shake the foundations of military Teutonic power. They preferred to save the independence of nations from Teutonic imperialism, which

latterly had become too arrogant, too disturbing, and too dangerous.

If through the great war the mortal blow is struck at *Kultur* and results in harm for real human progress, the censure must be given to the people of the New Italy, and with this censure must come remorse and shame forever.

If, instead, the mortal blow given to *Kultur* by the great war results in good for real human progress, the credit for this should in justice be given to the people of the New Italy; and with the credit should also be given universal recognition, and glory forever.

The future Tacitus will be the judge.

XI

The Omnipotents.

The present great war is the logical and natural epilogue of the evils committed by the privileged class during its long dominion over the world. It is the culmination of that which this class could practically always commit to the harm of the entire world.

It is true that the defenders of human rights have counterposed across the centuries the fruits of their minds, vigorous, noble, and immortal; the impulse of their conscience, kind, pitiful, and affectionate; the martyrdoms of their flesh, heroic, magnanimous, and sublime. But all this effusion of beauty has not been able to prevent the opening of that Pandora's box and the escaping of the miasm of its putrid contents to the infection of the entire social organism.

This indicates that the intellectual, moral, and material elements used by the defenders of human rights, however much they may spring from the purest fountains of thought and sentiments, and however ardently they may have reached toward the holiest ideals of life, were not adaptable to human nature (whether to the oppressors nor to the oppressed). If they had been adaptable, humanity would have assimilated

them. And at the present time there would be neither oppressed nor oppressors. All would have already entered voluntarily or involuntarily into that longed-for phase of civil life. Into that phase in which the people, all peoples without distinction, can find only justice, liberty, prosperity, brotherhood, peace, and happiness.

From the ruins of the great war, saturated by the blood and anguish of all the human family, will arise a breath of new and vitalizing energy. This breath will create a new order of men, who will be omnipotent, and will be called the *Omnipotents*.

I predict this with the emotion born of inmost certainty.

The Omnipotents will take the place of those (both lay and ecclesiastic) who have never done other than defend in vain the rights of humanity.

The Omnipotents will overthrow those (lay and ecclesiastic) who do not do other than obstinately further evil.

But their work—the work of the Omnipotents—will not have the sudden destructive violence of seismic movements. Their work will be like the gradual, fruitful virtue of the sun which appears every morning on the horizon. Their work will have the active principle of love, and, as such, will penetrate into the debilitated social organism (and no deleterious influence will be able to stop it); it will purify; it will heal; it will be raised to the highest summits of physical, psychological, and spiritual perfection, to the point where the poetical dream of my Campanella will finally become a reality — always progressive and triumphant in the daily and perennial life of the human race:

O pietas, o prisca fides, o candida corda,
Lugentum ignorantumque atri abiere colores;
Exulet impietas, fraudes, mendacia, lites.
Nec timeant agnive lupum, aut armenta leonem;
Inque bonum populi discent regnare tyranni;
Ocia cessarunt et cessavere labores,
Nam labor est iocus, in multos partitus amice.

O pity, O faith, O pure heart,
Of lying and ignorance the black colors have faded.

Wickedness, deceit, lying, and wrangling, will have burned out.
No longer will the lambs fear the wolves, nor the herds the lion,
And let the people teach the tyrants to rule well,
Laziness will cease and labors will become
A pleasure, when divided equally among many friends.

[THE END]

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Press and
Individual Opinions
on the book

JOURNALISM OF THE
ITALIAN EMIGRANTS IN
AMERICA

by Luigi Carnovale
Published in
Chicago, Illinois
United States of America

PRESS AND INDIVIDUAL OPINIONS

The Chicago Record Herald (Edwin L. Shuman), Chicago Illinois:

In a volume in the Italian language entitled, *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America*, Luigi Carnovale offers his compatriots a score of lively and interesting essays on various timely topics touching the Italians in the United States. The chief essay, as the foregoing title indicates, is one on the tribulations of the men who are trying to publish Italian newspapers in this country. The author tells many of his own amusing and discouraging experiences. He has a poor opinion of the average Italian immigrant and says so with refreshing frankness. But he blames his fellow countrymen most of all for casting off their Italian patriostim and adopting a shoddy Americanism in its stead. He thinks Italians should not vote here, much less talk about putting up Italian candidates, when an Irish boss boasts that he can buy all the Italian votes he wants with a barrel of beer. The cure for the whole evil, in the opinion of Signor Carnovale, is more education and more Italian patriotism.

In a later essay he pays his respects in language which he modestly calls "piuttosto vivace," to the Chicago priest who maligned Mazzini and Garibaldi in a sermon. He also has his opinion of American law for allowing DeForest and others to usurp Marconi's wireless invention. But perhaps the hottest shot for Americans will be found in the chapter defending Caruso from the scandal of the monkey-house incident. One wonders if the Chicago daily that originally printed this essay knew the meaning of all the hot Italian metaphors in it.

Signor Carnovale writes with fluency, force and vivacity. His fancy seems as inexhaustible as his vocabulary, and he has both humor and intellectual poise. One needs to read only a few pages of his book to see that he is a lively example of the alert young manhood which is regenerating Italy at the present moment.

Italy, Chicago, Illinois:

Luigi Carnovale has brought out a volume entitled, *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America.*

It is comforting to see that the restless American life based on materialism and the incessant running after the yellow demon (gold), as Maxim Gorky would say, has not altered the pure idealism of the author, which is one of the innate characteristics of the sons of the land where the *Sì* is sounded.

In fact, between the covers of the book which is (we do not know if by chance or by premeditation) of a conspicuous green color, herald of

hopes and illusions, one feels the heart-beats which the years passed in America have not confused, have not deviated from the order of their basic aspirations.

But because of that pessimism which exists in the human soul, it would seem from the title of the book that the volume might easily break a lance for and against that much criticised colonial press. Instead, Luigi Carnovale breaks not one but a thousand lances to show, in the best light, that force which is the result of Italianity in America extending wherever a group of Italians are gathered together and that finds — its eternal adversaries — indolence of the undeveloped mass, and a cynical smile, one might almost say of compassion, on the lips of those who through force of circumstances today hold tenaciously to a handful of gold.

Without reticence, without compromise, the author, with a style which goes straight to the soul, praises where praise is necessary to encourage initiative among emigrants; but his words descend like a whip when he denounces some of those erroneous criterions which creep into our colonies.

But this book has not been written only to praise virtue or to censure vices. A highly patriotic ideal floats through the whole volume: the moral regeneration of our emigrants. These latter coming in great part from little villages in Italy which are scattered among the wooded mountains or are in the depths of the valleys, have had, up to this time the habit of assuming a certain inferiority when they find themselves in contact with the American people in the populous cities of sky-scrapers and elevated railroads.

If our emigrants, who remember only as a dream Naples or Genoa, knew their own country better which, to a past that is unique in the world, unites a present equally glorious, they would have a greater self-respect and would not look with exaggerated admiration at everything which is not Italian.

This conception which we have presented in a few words is the spirit of the book, *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America.*

Luigi Carnovale, Italian in his inmost fibre, deep student of the thought of Dante and Mazzini, which he cites with great liberality, feels a sacred cult which might almost be called a fanaticism—for his Patria.

With scrutinizing eye he does not stop at the superficialities which appear to make America seem great; but he goes to the bottom with his surgeon's knife and with impartial examination puts in a true light the facts which remind one of the famous clay-footed statue dreamed of by Nebuchadnezzar.

Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America is not a book written by an amiable author to caress small ambitions and flatter self love. With youthful enthusiasm the writer has transfused into his pages a little of his own spirit, which is full of idealism and poetry. His book is the cry of an exile who has tempered his spirit in the sacred cult of the "proud Ghibelline" (Dante). He sees, above all other conceptions, the Patria,

as the land which has given birth to martyrs of thought such as Campanella and Giordano Bruno, to discoverers of natural forces and of physical laws such as Galileo and Marconi, to great patriots, to illustrious writers: he sees Italy in the most vigorous productions of her genius. And this Italy he exalts; and it is this Italy he wishes recognized in America, the land discovered by an Italian.[1]

The Transatlantic Italian Tribune, Chicago, Illinois:

As soon as we received the book, *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America*, by Luigi Carnovale we read it from cover to cover without stopping, so great was the interest that it inspired in us.

As soon as we had read the verses,

> A conscience overcast, or with its own, or with another's shame,
> will taste forsooth the tartness of thy word,

with which Dante prophesied the mission of the press, and which Carnovale placed so appropriately at the beginning of his work, we, in our quality of journalists, began to feel a divine sense of gratitude to the author for his work. And, as we continued in the reading of the preface, in which the Colonial press was bravely defended, such a sense assumed great proportions, until at a certain point of our enthusiasm we mentally dedicated a monument of gratitude to our Carnovale.

We are sure that our Italian-American colleagues will not less than we, but even more, join in declaring themselves grateful to the author of this book for the rehabilitation which he makes for our mission, and of which he merits the title of Cavalier.

The lances which Carnovale breaks for us deserve to be blessed. From the preface follows a series of fine articles which the author had published in various journals in the United States and which one re-reads with pleasure and interest for the brilliancy of form as well as for the value of his ideas.

The Patria (Silvio Picchianti Editor), Chicago, Illinois:

What truths Luigi Carnovale presents in his book *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America!* And how he presents them!

The vivacity, the purity of style, the sincerity of the presentation of facts, the pictures of the surroundings, the colonial types, from the old virago spitting gall against the director of the paper which had the audacity to continue to send itself to her, to that president of a society who read his paper upside down, all, all makes the book sympathetic and interesting.

And none better than we Journalists, who live in similar surroundings — the deficiencies, defects and shameful apathy of which Carnovale places in relief — can judge the truth and honesty of the work of this

[1] This article was published also by *The Transatlantic Italian Tribune* of Chicago, Illinois and in *The Montagna* of Newark, New Jersey.

intelligent young man, who well knows the fate reserved for journalists, who with the pen depict the lives of their own emigrant countrymen, fraternally hiding their defects, exalting their virtues and defending them from the base and malignant attacks of certain American Journalists, who know nothing about us except through the crimes of the Black Hand, and always falsify, if they know, the history of our country, the mistress of cilization and culture in the world including this country, which was discovered by one of the most glorious sons of Italy.

Carnovale in his book has gathered various articles from the columns of the journals that he has directed in the United States — with which he launched the cry of defense for his brother emigrants; and these articles, besides revealing the strength of his mind, show the greatness of his true Italian soul to whom the interests of his poor compatriots are of the first importance, to whom are allotted not only spoliation but also the basest insults and infamous calumnies.

The article entitled *The Smearers of the Yellow Fever* for instance, is a masterpiece. The fiery words which with consummate eloquence Carnovale throws in the faces of the malignant accusers of the honest and sober Italian laborers, are arrows of well merited rebuke.

But we repeat, the whole book is fine and interesting; and if there is anything which gives us regret it is the word "Finis" which deprives us of the further delightful reading of the best book which the valiant pen of the author has written.

To Luigi Carnovale our sincere congratulations for the work of patriotism accomplished by the publication of the book which every Italian of heart and intelligence should read as have we, from the first to the last page.[1]

The Century, Chicago, Illinois:

The fine book, *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America*, by Luigi Carnovale should be read by everybody, because all can learn something from it, especially we, voluntary exiles, who live far from the production of our own books and in a land where one finds no satisfaction other than that of the conquest of the *Yellow God*.

The book is divided into a preface and twenty-two chapters.

In the preface the author, young and full of faith, is animated by the highest ideals. He explains the reasons which have induced him to publish, in a single volume, the articles which he has written in various journals of the United States.

With *verve* indeed, with much *verve*, he shows up in a clear light and without compliments the intellectual inferiority of our emigrants and their apathy toward everything that pertains to Italianity, and he affirms that if our colonies are not given consideration, if they are scorned and villified, the fault is because of illiteracy. Therefore, there should be more education in Italy and more Italianity in America.

[1] This article was also published by *The Banner* of Baltimore, Maryland.

When our peasant has learned to know the land of his birth, when he learns that Italy has led the whole world in civilization, he, we are certain, will no longer be ashamed to call himself an Italian.

In the chapters which follow the preface, the author, with no ordinary acumen, has plunged his bistoury into the various colonial questions, and with a sure hand incises and exposes to the public the moral misery in which we emigrants live.

But at the same time the author with a soul exuberant with sentiment, which is almost mystical, makes us re-live in our minds the most beautiful pages of our history, and as in a cinematographic projection, he makes us behold scenes which seize our souls and transport them high, high above, where all is light, life and strength.

And we, exhausted by the daily struggle, plunge our souls into the pages in order to re-inforce ourselves for new battles in the field of art and letters; art which exalts with the charm of its beauty because beauty is its natural foundation. And he who is conquered by beauty, as is Luigi Carnovale, cannot remain indifferent to it but is attracted to it as by a magnetic force.

In the book of Carnovale the echo of the human conscience and the most important facts of the Italian colony are described in a fascinating and suggestive manner. The reading of them, the facile form, the occult beauty, transported us far from the base passions of men and for a time we forgot the surroundings in which we are constrained to live.

It has not been our intention to give a critical review in this brief notice but a slight hint of what the book contains and to express the hope that Luigi Carnovale will give other things to literature to maintain high and unsullied the Italian name in this land.[1]

The Bulletin of the Italian Societies, Chicago, Illinois:

"*Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America*" by Luigi Carnovale contains a series of strong articles following a long preface which epitomizes, with sagacious and truthful criticism, a full program of Italianity.

The book contains fine ideas and is well written, and although on some points we do not entirely agree with the author, we cannot do less than congratulate him heartily and recommend the reading of his book.

The Sentinel, Hoboken, New Jersey:

Luigi Carnovale with his fine book *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America* has filled a gap in the Italo-American literary world, defending in brilliant prose the not always gracious figure of our colonial journalism, and discussing the mass of emigrants with a vivacity of

[1] This article was reproduced in the *Transatlantic Italian Tribune* of Chicago, Illinois:

style which charms the reader and makes him devour it without stopping, so splendid is the form, and the excellence of ideas, be it when he speaks of the sorrows of our people, or when he describes their misunderstood or unappreciated virtues.

Luigi Carnovale, well known by other valuable works, merits our admiration and gratitude.

This article was published also in *The Transatlantic Tribune* of Chicago.

The Patria, Spokane, Washington:

In the book, *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America*, are gathered various articles by that valiant writer Luigi Carnovale.

We are pleased to see the practical utility of the above articles, written by a master who, to the enthusiasm of youth, unites the judgment of an erudite man.

Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America in our opinion is of interest to all of our emigrants, who would do well to acquire it and treasure that which is so splendidly written in it.

The Gazette of Massachusetts, Boston, Mass:

The sympathetic writer, Luigi Carnovale, has published a fine book of more than 200 pages called, *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America*.

The book contains a score of articles which redound to the honor of the young author both for the literary form and the wise, just and educative ideas expressed therein.

The Courier of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, Ohio:

Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America has been brought out in Chicago by Luigi Carnovale.

The author reveals himself from the first to the last page of the book above all as an Italian of mind and heart. With profound knowledge of men and things he treats, in a masterly manner, important colonial questions in Italian life.

It is a most interesting book which should be read by everyone.

The Aurora, Houston, Texas:

Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America by Luigi Carnovale is a fine volume, an interesting work, especially in these days in which nonentities can easily gain fame for grotesque impudences, and audacious insolence; in these days when a crowd of lazy ignoramuses play with a sure hand on the tolerance and the immorality of the public; in these days in which commercial speculation has even insinuated itself into the sacred halls of thought.

Carnovale's book is a necessity for everyone.

We hope that the effort of this writer will carry a salutary reawakening to all of the Italian colonies of the United States.

THE LIGHT, Utica, New York:

The talented writer Luigi Carnovale has published in Chicago a splendid volume entitled *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America*.

It is written with simplicity and true literary style. And while it exposes the pus which is contained in our colonies, it expresses with thought based upon the most scrupulous truths, the erroneous and stupid opinion which the emigrants have in regard to the Italo-American press. Besides this the author tries to implant in the emigrants highly patriotic ideas in order to further the moral redemption of our colonies.

Carnovale, who was the valiant director of *Il Pensiero* and of other journals, will please accept our congratulations for the book which he has brought to light. Every Italian family should be provided with it.

THE FREE THOUGHT, Ensley and Birmingham, Alabama:

Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America is the title of a splendid book published by the strong and sympathetic writer Luigi Carnovale.

In this book are gathered valuable articles which this clear writer had previously published in various journals of the United States.

They are preceded by a preface in which the author describes very wisely the colonial surrounding and lays bare certain hard facts.

This is a book which every Italian should read in order to reap benefit to himself.

THE COLONIAL STAR, Pen Argyl, Pennsylvania:

A good book certainly is *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America* by Luigi Carnovale in which a little of everything regarding the Italian emigrant is compended.

The book is extremely well written, and the author merits the encomiums not only of the Italian press but of all intelligent Italians.

THE COLONIAL AWAKENING, Syracuse, New York

An interesting book has been published in Chicago: *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America*.

The author, signor Luigi Carnovale, shows himself to be a writer of ability.

He develops his arguments with great facility and frankness, giving

blame where it is necessary, while on the other hand he honestly praising those who merit it.

He develops his thought with patriotic love, and lucidity. With scrutizining eye he does not stop at the superficialities of things, but goes directly to the bottom, bringing to light all of the defects and at the same time all of the merits of our emigrants.

Notwithstanding that on some points we may be a little at variance with Carnovale, we must affirm that this is a most valuable book.

The Italian Messenger, San Antonio, Texas:

The fine book entitled, *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America*, is a superior production by our intelligent compatriot, signor Luigi Carnovale.

The author has known how to treat with delicate tact colonial questions which are interesting to us all. The beauty of his volume consists in the various truths which are well lighted up in it, and which our emigrants should treasure.

To the brilliant writer we send our sincere congratulations.

Our Times, Pittsburg, Pennsylvania:

Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America by Luigi Carnovale is written with vivacity and elegance.

The author touches vitally all the colonial ulcers, all the moral miseries, all the little hates, and the eternal deplorable diatribes, in this country of the "Yellow God."

Luigi Carnovale reveals himself in places limpid, harmonious and almost sculpturesque, a cultured and fearless journalist, free thinker with a gentle soul, and, above all, an Italian of mind and heart.

There vibrates strongly from the first to the last page of this volume the chord of Italianity as a spontaneous and noble, not as a simulating nor calculating, sentiment.

These are the values of a book which deserve to be read by all who are interested in the vast and complex colonial problems.

The Italian-American Progress, New York City:

Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America is the title of a book which has come to light in Chicago.

The author, Luigi Carnovale, an exceptional young man, of active mind, with a loyal, sympathetic and forceful character, writing in various journals of the United States, has always given fine proof of his varied abilities and of his facile touch.

In his *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America* which has been accepted with favor by the public, strongly vibrates the patriotic note.

We extend our praise to the young author.

WHY? Schenectady, New York:

Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America is the title of a fine volume of more than two hundred pages published by Luigi Carnovale, of Chicago.

With it the author has made us enjoy hours of sound reading from which we have gathered valuable opinions about Italo-American journalism and original ideas about the hard road which one must travel who honestly publishes a journal in the interest and dignity of our country and our language.

Carnovale with facile pen has written words of truth because he has felt them; instructive and moral pages, because they tend to the betterment of the emigrants.

Il Gionalismo is a book attractive in appearance as well as useful in substance.

THE TWENTIETH CENTURY, Pittsburg, Pennsylvania:

Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America is full of wise considerations on most important subjects. The preface alone is a treasure.

The author reveals himself in it as a deep student of the elements which conspicuously abound in our American colonies.

In fact the book of Luigi Carnovale is most useful in all respects, is well written, and one does not lay it down until he has finished it.

SUNDAY, Rochester, New York:

Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America by Luigi Carnovale reveals a good knowledge the Italian language; reveals also in the author an ardent soul full of good will, despising all that is, or that he believes to be, wrong.

It is a book one can read with pleasure because it is sincere, courageous, and well written.

THE UNION, Pueblo, Colorado:

Our valorous colleague Luigi Carnovale has published in Chicago a splendid book entitled *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America.*

It is a most elegant volume written in a brilliant and vivacious style and it should be read and studied by all intelligent and cultivated persons; a volume which is a treasure because it contains profound observations and a most accurate study of Italian life in this country of material affairs.

To the brilliant author who has published this eminently patriotic work we send our praise and congratulations.

The New Life, Rocksprings, Wyoming:

Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America by the illustrious writer Luigi Carnovale contains fine and healthy ideas.

Courier of Trinidad, Trinidad, Colorado:

Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America is a book which is worthy of a place in every Italian home in the United States.

From the simplicity and purity of style there emanates from the book of Carnovale that sense of Italianity which should be of benefit to every compatriot emigrant and should also be their great pride.

Luigi Carnovale shows himself master of his subject. He develops, in a forceful manner, certain hard truths concerning the Italian emigrants in America.

In fact it is a fine book, this of Carnovale's, and the *Courier* advises its reading by all those who still feel themselves to be Italians in this land of voluntary exile.

Master Paul, Philadelphia, Pennsylania:

We have greatly admired *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America*, which Luigi Carnovale has published in Chicago.

It is impossible to put in relief all of the merits which the book contains; merits which one can better find by reading the book itself than by our few words of review.

Carnovale's book is a collection of historical and doctrinal articles which treat of colonial questions.

The author exposes with clearness, truth and practical conviction that which one feels, thinks and wishes for the Italians who live in the American colonies. He brilliantly proves the apathy of the emigrants in regard to admiration of ideals, patriotic sentiments, and civic education.

We shall keep this wise publication among our archives.

The Review, Newark, New Jersey:

Luigi Carnovale has gathered together a collection of serious, masterful articles in his book *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America*, touching at first hand all of the problems of the Italian emigrants in North America.

The articles are written in a brilliant style. They are of the greatest interest to students of the true and elegant language of Dante. And for this reason we recommend everyone to acquire the book immediately.

The Echo, of Rhode Island, Providence, Rhode Island:

A most useful book is *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord*

America from the excellent and well-known writer, Signor Luigi Carnovale.

It is a work of patience and accuracy; a valuable book which one reads with pleasure and enthusiasm. In it the author has had the noble purpose of defending the native Patria and at the same time the rights of the Italian laborers scattered in every part of the United States.

This important book is necessary for the emigrants; everyone of whom should acquire it.

We heartily wish for the author a long life, in order that he may continue to write other useful books in the interest of the far away Patria, and also for the interests of his compatriots in the United States.

THE ITALIAN, Cleveland, Ohio:

Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America by Luigi Carnovale is a book written in an especially graceful style and with heartfelt sentiments of Italianity. Errors, prejudices and questions of colonial life are treated in a masterful manner.

The Italians, instead of buying and reading *I Reali di Francia*[1] and so many other useless books, would do well to buy and read this book of Carnovale.

ROME, Denver, Colorado:

The fine book, *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America*, by Luigi Carnovale is, we can well say, a treasure of acute observations and of serious discussions; it is a book which should be entered in the catalogue of the best books which up to the present time have been written concerning the welfare of our emigrants.

A hearty *bravo* to our colleague Carnovale and the hope that the public will give a warm welcome to his book which truly merits the praise of all readers of good sense.

THE OPINION, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania:

Our esteemed colleague, Luigi Carnovale, has published in Chicago a book entitled *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America* in which are gathered many valuable articles, introduced by a preface in which, in a vivid and sometimes biting prose, the author draws a picture of colonial surroundings, bringing to light some hard facts. Although not agreeing with Carnovale in many of his ideas and deductions, we agree with him that the Italian colonial journalism in the United States, with all of the evident defects of a new organization, is still worthy of support and respect for the services it has and does render to the colonies and the mother country.

[1] A book in which are fantastically described the heroisms of Charlemagne.

THE SUN, Bridgeport, Connecticut:

Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America by Luigi Carnovale is a good book. With it the author has accomplished a salutary work for our emigrant compatriots. While bringing to light the pus contained in the Italian colonies in America, he expresses clearly his thought, but at the same time holds himself scrupulously impartial.

Carnovale in his articles, which we can qualify as critical and literary, treats the question from a general standpoint. He shows that in the Italian colonies of America there exists an ignorant, superstitious and bad element. But his articles tend to the moral redemption of such elements. Will he succeed in his effort? We wish to be optimistic and hope that he may.

Whoever can absorb what Carnovale's book contains will never regret having read it.

Sincere congratulations to the author for his interesting publication.

THE ECHO OF TAMPA, Tampa, Florida:

Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America by Luigi Carnovale is one of those books which one can without reservation call fine, and the author is preceded by a good reputation as a journalist and novelist.

Luigi Carnovale has had, in common with the rest of us, his sad experiences as a colonial journalist, and in his volume he condenses in brilliant and sincere style, his memories and personal impressions, from which we make no dissent for the great truths which they contain and reflect.

He who has lived in our colonies and has lived as a journalist conscious of his mission, cannot but unconditionally approve the severe but just criticism which Carnovale hurls against individuals and cliques who are the real and mortal enemies of the moral elevation of our emigrants.

Perhaps we might find ourselves differing from the political opinions of our author, opinions which are tranluscent, calm and well defined in the pages of *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America.* But we cannot deny to the interesting volume two most valuable qualities: clearness and elegance of style, and the co-ordination of his talented thought.

Those who have not yet read *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America* should read it, and they will certainly form the same opinion which we have of the author and his writings.

THE CAPITAL, Albany, New York:

Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America is the title of a book which has been published in Chicago by Luigi Carnovale who, besides being a distinguished writer and a passionate student of the tongue of Dante, is also an acute observer of the economic and social condition of the Italian emigrants in America.

The Italian-American, New Orleans, Louisiana:

A book which should be in the hands of all Italians, whether in Italy or in the United States, who are interested in the burning question of our emigration, is *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America* by Luigi Carnovale.

Pitiful truths there are which sadden one and which often destroy our spontaneous enthusiasms, echoing the love for the Patria; pictures, pervaded with bitter pessimism, in which one sees from time to time in their proper light, the prominent colonial personage, and our illiterate laborer (often the above *personage* is illiterate let us whisper in your ears, readers); the regionalism which divides and embitters; the anti-Italianity which dishonors. All of the lesser and greater colonial miseries in fact, are the object of this brilliant volume.

To the author who, with sincerity of purpose and frank words exposes many little souls inflated with their ridiculous megalomania, and who at the same time comforts our spirits when, almost by happy contrast, he recalls the refulgent history and glories of our Italy — we wish success equal to his frank audacity.

The Awakening, Denver, Colorado:

Luigi Carnovale, who possesses a rare talent has published in Chicago *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America*—a collection of brilliant articles written with verve and erudition.

Vesuvius, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania:

Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America by Luigi Carnovale, one is compelled to read for beauty of style, for its interest in a variety of subjects, and for acuteness of observation.

Some might disagree with the author in the manner in which he regards some things; but we can be sure that all can find in the volume of Carnovale, the satisfaction which one feels before an expression of life, before sincerity of conviction.

We recommend it to our readers.

The Observer, Kansas City, Missouri:

We have carefully read the volume, *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America.* Our congratulations to Luigi Carnovale with the wish that his work may illuminate the clouded minds of our laborers.

The Southern Courier, New Orleans, Louisiana:

A splendid book entitled, *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America,* has been brought out by Luigi Carnovale.

In this book are gathered valuable articles that this clever writer had already published in various journals of the United States. It is prefaced by an article in which the author describes the colonial surroundings, laying bare hard truths.

The Italian Workman, Windber, Pennsylvania:

The new work of Luigi Carnovale entitled, *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America*, is a fine and elegant volume of more than two hundred pages. It is most interesting for anyone who cares for serious reading. In it the author describes with high and noble sentiments, free from any partiality, that which is done, that which is being done, and that which must be done to hold high the prestige of the Italian name in the United States of America.

The noble mission of the Italian press, which the author defends with a spirit worthy of all respect, is given in sincere and enthusiastic words; and for the noble defense which Carnovale makes for the Italians and for Italy, his volume deserves to be read, well considered and appreciated by every student.

We recommend this interesting book to everyone.

The Hour, Newark, New Jersey:

The young writer, Luigi Carnovale, has brought to light a book of more than two hundred pages entitled *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America*, which we have read without stopping and with keen interest.

The fine volume fills the gap which for years has existed among the Italians. It is a red hot and caustic iron which Carnovale has applied to the great and gangrenous ulcer of our journalism, which is often badly managed, often misunderstood, and always and everywhere despised.

Carnovale, intelligent and courageous soldier of the true mission of the press, has published articles in the various journals of the United States which are now gathered together in the above volume and which are the work of a valiant and daring pioneer who blazes the way through a dense wood, and after having cleared it shouts courageously at the end of the road.

Had we the authority, we should propose that the volume *Il Giornalism degli Emigrati Italiani del Nord America* should be published as an appendix to all of the Italian journals of America as an austere admonition to the respective colonies to appreciate the mission of the press; and to show the journalists the duty of knowing how they might produce a work replete with knowledge and progress.

In any case we are confident that this honest and truthful book of Carnovale, written in a fine Italian style and with virile character may be diffused, read, and understood everywhere.

The Uprising, Chicago, Illinois:

We have read without stopping *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America* by Luigi Carnovale and in it we have found honest truths. We hope that all of our compatriots will read this fine book as we have done.

The Socialist's Word, Chicago, Illinois:

Our colleague, Luigi Carnovale, a cultured and sympathetic young man, has published a well written study of impressions on the subject of *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America.*

The book has been praised by writers and by journals in the United States and in Italy, and the unanimous shower of eulogies have been well merited.

The book, which one gladly reads because it is written in an Italian form too little in use among the anglo-Saxonized (we hope to be pardoned the horrible vocabulary) of our colonies, has one principal and indisputable merit: it is true.

In these columns we rarely interest ourselves with reviews. It is because our readers in the daily struggle of life which cannot be delayed, would have little time to follow our critical dissertations. But we willingly make an exception.

We say to our companions: read *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America* and there you will learn something.

We militants, internationalists by conviction, congratulate Carnovale who, instructing and inviting to instruction, has known how to combat that patriotism which is the most idiotic and stupid: patriotism for the Patria of others.

And with this eulogy, truly felt we send the author a wish: that our emigrants if they do not know how to become *internationalists* after they have been stamped upon and kicked out of their own country, may not become ardent patriots for another country which receives them only as beasts of burden and of reproduction.

The Christian Register, of Boston, Mass.:

An interesting book has come into our hands which serves as an exposition of *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America.* It is a collection of articles written by Luigi Carnovale. The Italian press of our country has attained a significant position when it is able to call to its service writers possessed of such glowing imagination, generous purpose, and literary ability as young Carnovale possesses, qualities also made evident by his charming idyl *The Dream of Francesco.*

The Canadian Tribune, Toronto, Canada:

Our brilliant colleague, Luigi Carnovale of Chicago, has published a book entitled *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America.*

It is an important work in which the writer has gathered a number of wise articles previously published in various journals in the United States and which one re-reads with pleasure because, besides being written in good Italian, they are eminently patriotic.

We believe that this important book of Carnovale's should be in everyone's hands.

The Popular Review of Literature and Social Science, edited by Professor Napoleon Colaianni deputy to the National Parliament, Rome-Naples, Italy:

Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America by Luigi Carnovale is good in that it expresses sentiments full of Italianity.

Arts and Labor, the magazine of the Ricordi Publishing House, Milan, Italy:

The fine volume *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America* by Luigi Carnovale contains articles which are of interest not only to Italians scattered in America but to all Italians, because these articles treat in a brilliant manner of questions which refer especially to the prestige and well being of Italians.

The Goad, Naples, Italy:

A truly fine book of high patriotic and social sentiments is *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America* which has been brought out in Chicago by the esteemed writer, Luigi Carnovale.

Luigi Carnovale of Stilo, one of the strongest and most brilliant intellects of young Calabria, has for a number of years pursued the profession of journalist with dignity and high ideals in America; and he has gathered in this valuable volume many of his articles, the results of his acute observation and wise study.

Various and vibrating questions are treated by Carnovale in this book, which is the brightest gem of his works.

Journalism in America is doubtless deficient but is always high, noble, patriotic, humanitarian, and is not appreciated nor encouraged by Americanized compatriots, nor by the representatives of the mother country. All this is described in vivid colors and with sad reflections.

Carnovale describes the miserable condition in which the emigrants live, who, because of their lack of education, of patriotism and cohesion, remain in a state of continual inferiority before the ignorance of strangers who are inflated with pride of gold.

Carnovale searches the most fundamental causes for all of this; points out the remedies; spurs the society of the *Dante Alighieri;* proposes and insists on teaching patriotism and upon compulsory teaching in the schools in Italy, not abstractly as now, but in the practical things of life.

Carnovale treats profoundly of many other things, even literary, in his excellent book. But the space which we lack coupled with our desire that every Italian shall acquire and read the book with attention and love, makes it seem best that we shall not prolong our review as we should wish and as the book itself merits.

The volume *Il Giornalismo* represents the highest manifestations of Italianity and patriotism, impersonated in Luigi Carnovale, high-minded, noble soul of Calabrian fibre.

It is enough to know that the most eminent men of Italy have congratulated the distinguished author for his work of inestimable merit, which should be in the hands of everyone.

We, from these columns, cannot do other than send to Luigi Carnovale our most fervid good wishes for a long and brilliant career.

ACCATTATIS, PROF. LUIGI:

Calabrian scholar, sent one of his pamphlets to Carnovale with these autograph words:

"To Luigi Carnovale who honors Calabria, with admiring and grateful sentiments the author sends this book.

ARDIGÒ, PROFESSOR ROBERTO, Philosopher and Educator:

Esteemed Signor Carnovale: I received your book "*Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America* and I have read with the greatest interest the forty-three pages of the preface. I will also read the remainder. In the meantime I thank you for having had the goodness to send me such a fine gift.

To my far off distant worthy Italian brother, I am happy to send my affectionate salutations.

Yours very sincerely,
PROF. ROBERTO ARDIGÒ.

Padua, Italy

BACCELLI, ALFREDO, Novelist, Poet, Deputy in the National Parliament, ex-minister of Italy:

Esteemed Signor Carnovale: I have received your book and I thank you. You have a fine talent and a brilliant culture. In cordial exchange I send you my last romance. With a hand grasp.

Yours,
A. BACCELLI.

Rome, Italy.

Boselli Paolo, present Prime minister of Italy, and honorary president of the National Society of the *Dante Alighieri:*

Esteemed Signor Carnovale: I am most grateful for your courtesy in sending me your interesting book.

The thought of the Italians is always held in a single ideal wherever they may live; not even the seas separate our spirits.

It is to our advantage to demonstrate the intellectual activity of Italians who live in far countries.

And it is fine to see that in that land of free and marvelous energies, the Italian talents shine.

With particular regards, I am.

Yours sincerely,

P. Boselli.

Turin, Italy.

Mantegazza, Professor Paolo, Anthropologist, Hygienist, Scientific Writer, Educator, Senator of the Kingdom of Italy:

Dear Signor Carnovale: A thousand thanks for your gracious gift. Your book vibrates with a warm patriotism which does great honor to you and baptises you as an eloquent apostle of Italianity in America.

Farewell, from my heart.

Mantegazza.

San Terenzio, Spezia.

Martini Ferdinando, Scholar, Deputy in the Italian National Parliament, ex-governor of Eritrea, ex-minister of public instruction and ex-minister of colonial affairs.

Most Esteemed Signor Carnovale: I have received your excellent book and I thank you for it.

The sad pages of the preface show how important is the work which you are doing with such untiring energy.

The problem of the Italians in foreign lands is one of the gravest that the mother country must solve; it is the problem which must be solved with calm study and with an intellect of love above everything else. The Colonial Institute in the Council of which I have the honor to take part, is now considering it, and of its work we shall have, I hope, practical and prompt results.

It is well that help should come from the Italians themselves who live in the colonies; and you send us most valuable aid, maintaining at the same time the cult of the Patria, of her language and of her glorious traditions.

Again thanking you, believe me,

Yours sincerely,

Rome, Italy. Martini.

Among those who sent their congratulations to Luigi Carnovale for his book were the following:

Caruso, Enrico tenor.
Casolini, Antonio deputy to the National Parliament.
Ciccotti, Professor Ettore socialist deputy to the Italian National Parliament.
Cilea, Francesco composer of music, director of the conservatory at Palermo.
Costa, Andrea leader of the Italian socialist party and vice-president of the chamber of deputies.
Cundari, Professor Antonio lawyer, mayor of Cosenza, Calabria.
D'Ancona, Professor Alessander scholar, critic, educator, senator of the Kingdom.
Emanuele, Filiberto, duke of Aosta cousin of Emanuel III, King of Italy.
Fortunato, Giustino deputy to the Italian National Parliament.
City Council of Milan.
Nathan, Ernesto Mayor of Rome.
Pompilj, Guido undersecretary of State of Foreign affairs.
Rapisardi, Mario poet.
Rava, Luigi minister of public instruction.
Rossi, Professor Luigi deputy to Italian National Parliament and general commissioner of emigration.
Sonnino, Sidney ex-minister, ex-prime minister and present minister of foreign affairs.
Victor Emanuel III, King of Italy.
Zumbini, Professor Bonaventura, scholar, critic, senator of the Kingdom.
And many others.

In Preparation:

The Omnipotents

Tommaso Campanella

A U S
H U
RHETIAN ALPS
CARNIC
TYROL
BOTZEN
CLES
SONDRIO
TRENTINO
TRENT
RIVA
ROVERETO
ALA
BELLUNO
UDI
COMO
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MODENA
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RAVENNA
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I T A L Y
RIMINI
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T R I A-
G A R Y
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THE UNREDEEMED ITALIAN REGIONS
LE REGIONI ITALIANE IRREDENTE
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GRADISCA
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D R I A T I C S E A
D A L M A T I A
SEBENICO
TRAU
SALONA
SPALATO
ANCONA
CURZOLA

Perchè l'Italia è Entrata Nella Grande Guerra

Perchè l'Italia è Entrata Nella Grande Guerra

di

Luigi Carnovale

Autore di "Una Visita al Pittore Andrea Cefaly", "Mia Madre", "Il Sogno di Francesco", "Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America".

Io parlo per ver dire,
Non per odio d'altrui nè per disprezzo.
—PETRARCA.

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Chicago, Illinois
Stati Uniti d'America
1917

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Alla memoria dei caduti
e
al dolore dei sopravviventi
io dedico
questo lavoro d'amore
scritto nell'esilio
col pensiero proteso ai supremi ideali umani
per rivendicare
al cospetto degli stranieri che ignorano la verità
l'onore del popolo italiano.

Luigi Carnovale.

Chicago, Illinois
Stati Uniti d'America
Anno 1917.

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Perchè l' Italia è Entrata
Nella Grande Guerra

INTRODUZIONE

Una domanda. Un'insinuazione. Una premessa

Non appena Vittorio Emanuele III, il 23 maggio 1915, dichiarò guerra a Francesco Giuseppe, i miei numerosi amici americani — persone d'ambo i sessi intellettualmente e moralmente superiori — mi domandarono:

"Quali ragioni indussero l'Italia ad entrare nella conflagrazione europea, attaccando l'Austria?"

Tale domanda, suggerita senza dubbio da trepido affetto per

il bel Paese
che Appennin parte, e il mar circonda e l'Alpe,

mi convinse che quanto fino allora — fino alla suddetta data [1] — s'era scritto e pubblicato intorno allo straordinario avvenimento, non era stato sufficiente, almeno per una buona parte del pubblico americano, a dare un'idea precisa, e neppure approssimativa, delle cause che determinarono l'intervento dell'Italia nel macello che da tre anni sta terrorizzando e rovinando il mondo.

Credetti perciò necessario, anzi doveroso, esporre in un libro (come avrei potuto farlo a voce, o in un semplice articolo di giornale, o anche in un opuscolo?) le cause del tanto discusso intervento italiano: non per giudicare o condannare il governo monarchico dei Savoia (non è questo il momento del *rédde ratiónem*), ma per rispondere esaurientemente alla domanda rivoltami; sopratutto, per rivendicare in modo efficace la verità e la giustizia oltraggiate da un'insinuazione che parecchi dei miei amici americani ebbero il torto (mi si perdoni la franchezza) di raccogliere sia pure in buona fede. L'insinuazione, cioè, che il popolo italiano — quel popolo tanto onesto decoroso magnanimo — abbia commesso

[1] Oggi potrei ben dire: fino a ieri, cioè fino alla vigilia della pubblicazione di questo libro.

un infame tradimento dichiarando nullo il trattato della Triplice Alleanza e defezionando, conseguentemente, la causa dell'Austria e della Germania: ed abbia pazzamente corso l'álea della guerra contro le due nazioni alleate, perchè comprato (il popolo italiano!) dall'oro inglese e dall'oro francese, e perchè smanioso (il popolo italiano!) di conquistare terre altrui: terre, come per esempio Trento e Trieste, appartenenti per diritto divino ereditario all'imperiale e reale corona degli Asburgo.[1]

Premetto, a scanso d'equivoci, che l'animo mio rifugge *a priori* da ciò che, militarmente parlando, si chiama nazionalismo, campanilismo, *chauvinisme.* Adoro l'Italia — ov'ebbi i natali — per il glorioso contributo di pensiero e di sangue ch'ella sempre diede e dà tuttavia alle incessanti lotte della civiltà, della vera civiltà, contro la barbarie. Ma, nel medesimo tempo, ammiro gli altri paesi; amo sinceramente,

[1] *The World* (il noto quotidiano di New York), in data 12 gennaio 1917, vale a dire dopo venti mesi di guerra italiana, commentando le condizioni di pace contenute nella risposta data dai governi alleati al presidente Wilson, si esprimeva, riguardo alle aspirazioni irredentiste dell'Italia sulla costa orientale dell'Adriatico, nei seguenti termini:

Per lo meno due condizioni di secondaria importanza sono quanto mai immorali: quelle, cioè, che includono la pretesa di territori i quali non appartennero mai all'Italia e alla Rumenia, e che dovrebbero servire a pagare la camorra imposta da questi due governi eminentemente sordidi, come prezzo della loro entrata nella guerra a fianco degli Alleati.

Contro questi gentili complimenti protestarono i giornali italiani degli Stati Uniti e d'Italia, nonchè lo stesso governo di Roma per mezzo dei suoi ministri Ruffini e Bissolati.

Ma il *World*, in data 30 gennaio 1917, ritornava impassibilmente alla carica, pubblicando nelle sue colonne "editoriali" il seguente articolo:

Le pretese dell'Italia.—Malgrado le proteste del ministro Bissolati, Commissario Civile Italiano della Guerra, contro un recente articolo editoriale del "World", noi continueremo ad essere del parere che i motivi addotti dall'Italia per il suo intervento in questa guerra sono tanto poco difendibili, quanto lo sono quelli della Rumenia e della Bulgaria.

Il ministro Bissolati è rimasto sbalordito dalla colossale ignoranza del "World" il quale contesta all'Italia il diritto di rivendicare il carattere italiano di Trieste e che non prende in considerazione a favore dell'Italia i 50 anni di eroica resistenza contro la brutale dominazione austriaca.

La dominazione austriaca non è nè più nè meno brutale di quel che è stata durante i 33 anni nei quali l'Italia era alleata dell'Austria nella Triplice Alleanza.

Trieste ora non è italiana più di quanto lo fosse quando l'Italia lietamente godeva dei vantaggi della sua alleanza con la Germania e l'Austria.

Nè è probabile che l'Europa voglia impegnarsi in un'altra guerra per privare l'Austria del mare, e dare all'Italia territori sui quali essa etnicamente non ha maggiori diritti di quelli che ha su un terzo della Svizzera, e su Nizza e la Corsica ora occupate dalla Francia.

Molti altri giornali e riviste nord-americani hanno battuto e continuano a battere la stessa sólfa.

poichè l'amore è un sentimento naturale, gli uomini evoluti e non evoluti di tutte le razze; desidero vivamente, e propugno con le mie forze più pure e perseveranti, la pace universale avente per base — granitica perenne — la libertà, la prosperità, la felicità di tutti i popoli della Terra.

Nello svolgimento del mio assunto userò solo — se non con parsimonia, certo con la più scrupolosa oggettività — elementi positivi, costituiti da fatti che la Storia ormai registrò definitivamente nelle sue pagine eterne: da fatti che la Stampa, precorritrice e nutrice della Storia, riconobbe autentici: da fatti accaduti, accertati, della cui assoluta realtà non si può più dubitare.

Naturalmente, per logica necessità di cose, dovrò interpolare, in tali fatti, note illustrative più o meno brevi; dovrò spingermi a osservazioni, a considerazioni, a riflessioni conclusive più o meno rudi, ardite. Ma esse non saranno che in parte l'espressione del mio giudizio e, più che del mio giudizio, dei miei sentimenti personali: l'espressione, cioè, di quei larghi sentimenti altruistici, per i quali il mio cuore palpitò sempre, e sempre palpiterà, di fraterna tenerezza per le vittime — per tutte le vittime — delle iniquità sociali.

Le osservazioni, le considerazioni, le riflessioni ch'io farò, saranno, nella loro quasi totalità, l'espressione dei sentimenti che nella rossa primavera del 1915 slanciarono il popolo italiano al cimento della grande guerra. Sentimenti in cui tanto vibrò e prevalse la nota della solidarietà morale verso le creature innocenti, umili, deboli, colpite con efferata violenza nell'onore, nelle sostanze, nell'indipendenza nazionale, in tutti i sacri diritti della loro esistenza individuale e collettiva, dalla foia bestiale dei satrápaci potentati d'Europa. I quali ebbero pur sempre l'impudenza di strombazzarsi pastori cristianamente buoni e pacifici, mentre, in sostanza, non furono che maligni ipocriti, lupi ferocissimi: mentre i loro odierni delitti farebbero raccapricciare persino i più antropófagi troglodíti dell'antica Africa tenebrosa.

Le difficoltà di questo mio lavoro saranno molte e non lievi. Ma io spero superarle tutte felicemente.

PARTE PRIMA

I

L'inizio delle militaresche violenze austriache in Italia. La sassata del giovinetto Balilla (1746).

Carlo VI imperatore d'Austria (1711–1740), qualche tempo prima di morire, violava la legge salica, pubblicando un'ordinanza detta *prammatica sanzione*, con la quale nominava erede del trono la sua figliuola primogenita Maria Teresa.

Le Potenze europee — Francia, Spagna, Prussia e Baviera — che sostenevano la legge salica, non s'opposero lì per lì all'atto arbitrario dell'autocratico sovrano. Vi s'opposero dopo ch'egli cessò di vivere, dicendo chiaro e tondo a Maria Teresa ch'ella non poteva usurpare i diritti spettanti al sesso maschile.

La donna fece orecchie da mercante: ed eseguì con graziosa disinvoltura la comoda volontà del suo augusto genitore.

Allora le quattro Potenze oppositrici ricorsero a mezzi più persuasivi. Proclamarono imperatore d'Austria uno dei più legittimi pretendenti al trono (Carlo Alberto di Baviera, che assunse il nome di Carlo VII), e lo mandarono, accompagnato da un grosso esercito, a Vienna, per impossessarsi della corona "al cospetto di Dio e dei sudditi".

All'appressarsi del rivale, Maria Teresa ebbe paura: fuggì: riparò in Ungheria. Ma gli Ungheresi l'accolsero affettuosamente; le offrirono il loro braccio; giurarono, insieme con gli Austriaci rimasti a lei devoti, di ricuperarle il regno.

Agli Ungheresi ed agli Austriaci s'unirono ben presto l'Inghilterra e l'Olanda e, più tardi, anche Carlo Emanuele III di Savoia.

Tra i due gruppi s'accese una guerra che durò parecchio tempo. Dopo battaglie favorevoli or all'una or all'altra parte, la vittoria decisiva arrise finalmente, presso Piacenza, ai sostenitori di Maria Teresa.

I Francesi e gli Spagnoli furono costretti ad abbandonare l'Italia, dove l'ultima fase della guerra s'era svolta.

Così la figlia di Carlo VI potè salire indisturbata al trono.

L'esercito austriaco, imbaldanzito da tanto successo, piombò su Genova, "per punirla" d'avere parteggiato in favore del sesso maschile.

La città non era preparata a un siffatto colpo. Pur nondimeno essa tentò di resistere. Ma fu minacciata d'essere subitamente messa a ferro ed a foco. Per evitare tanta iattura, coloro che la reggevano non seppero far di meglio che consegnare bonariamente le chiavi delle porte cittadine ai nemici.

La soldataglia austriaca, fremente di vendetta e avida di bottino, urlò di gioia: entrò, saccheggiò, s'ubriacò, insultò, "commise turpitudini che non hanno riscontro nell'istoria". E come se ciò non bastasse, volle sborsati ventuno milioni di lire "per indennità di guerra". Ai cittadini che imploravano clemenza, il generale austriaco rispondeva brigantescamente ch'essi "meritavan di peggio: che li avrebbe spogliati perfino della camicia che indossavano, non lasciando loro che i soli occhi per piangere".

Il flagello durò tre mesi.

Nel pomeriggio del 5 dicembre 1746, mentre la soldataglia austriaca trascinava alcuni pezzi d'artiglieria nel popoloso quartiere di Portoria, si sfondò a un certo punto la strada, sotto il peso d'un enorme mortaio da bombe. Non essendo facile continuare il lavoro, la soldataglia, fiottando parole brusche e triviali, comandò ai cittadini presenti di dare aiuto. I cittadini si rifiutarono. La soldataglia, arrotando i denti, li ingiuriò, li aggredì, li caricò di pugni, li bastonò, li sciabolò senza pietà nè misericordia.

Un ardito fanciullo (Giovan Battista Perasso, soprannominato *Balilla*), irritato di sdegno per essere stato anch'egli percosso in malo modo da un soldataccio asutriaco, raccattò un sasso e — gridando *la rompo?!* — lo scagliò vigorosa-

mente contro il bruto, colpendolo alla testa e facendolo stramazzare mezzo morto al suolo.

L'atto eroico del fanciullo animò gli adulti. In un baleno si vide infuriare una gragnóla di sassi sulla soldataglia. Le campane sonarono a stormo. I cittadini ch'erano in casa udirono, sussultarono, compresero, s'armarono, si precipitaron fuori, affrontarono i barbari tuonando: "Viva Genova! Viva la libertà!"

La pugna, calda ostinata cruenta, durò cinque giorni. Gli oppressori furono alla fine sopraffatti, messi in fuga, inseguiti, dispersi.

Poco dopo, il popolano Giovanni Carbone, nel riconsegnare a nome dei Genovesi le chiavi della città al doge e agli altri supremi magistrati della Repubblica, pronunziava queste memorabili parole:

Signori, ecco le chiavi che voi deste con tanta leggerezza ai nostri nemici. Procurate in avvenire di meglio custodirle, poichè esse furono ricuperate col nostro sangue!

II

Smembramento e ripartizione dell'Italia nel 1815. La parte del leone all'Austria. La *Carboneria*.

Col trattato di Vienna, stipulato dai monarchi d'Europa dopo vinto Napoleone I a Waterloo il 18 giugno 1815, l'Italia fu smembrata e ripartita nel modo seguente:

il *Regno di Sardegna* (Sardegna, Piemonte e Liguria) a Vittorio Emanuele I di Savoia;

lo *Stato Lombardo-Veneto* (Lombardia, Venezia, i territori compresi tra il Po, il Ticino e l'Adriatico, l'antica Repubblica di Ragusa, le valli di Valtellina, Chiavenna e Bormio) all'Austria;

il *Granducato di Toscana* al principe austriaco Ferdinando III di Lorena;

il *Ducato di Modena e Reggio* all'arciduca Francesco IV, cugino dell'imperatore d'Austria;

il *Ducato di Lucca* a Maria Luisa di Borbone;

i *Ducati di Parma, Piacenza e Guastalla* a Maria Luigia, figlia dell'imperatore d'Austria e seconda moglie di Napoleone;

lo *Stato Romano* al pontefice;

il *Regno delle Due Sicilie* (Italia Meridionale) a Ferdinando I di Borbone;

la *Repubblica di San Marino*, sotto la protezione del pontefice;

il *Canton Ticino* alla Confederazione Svizzera;

il *Principato di Monaco* ai Grimaldi-Montignon, sotto la protezione del re di Sardegna;

l' *Isola di Malta* all'Inghilterra;

la *Corsica* alla Francia.

L'Austria, che direttamente e indirettamente aveva avuto la parte del leone, si riserbò anche il diritto d'occupare militarmente Ferrara e Comacchio.

Gli effetti che da tale smembramento e da tale ripartizione derivarono alla bella ma sventurata penisola, si possono facilmente immaginare. Leggi inique: balzelli, persecuzioni, spoliazioni, ingiustizie d'ogni sorta: tutti i mali che ancor oggi formano la trista caratteristica di quei governi imperialistici, i quali antepongono, senza veruno scrupolo, i privati interessi dinastici al benessere dei popoli.

Fortunatamente gl'Italiani non erano più disposti a far da spensierate pecore come per il passato. Le idee propagate dalla rivoluzione francese e i fatti straordinari svoltisi durante le guerre napoleoniche avevano drizzato le menti, avevano risvegliato le coscienze intorpidite da tanti secoli di servaggio. Sui monti della Calabria e degli Abruzzi s'era già formata da qualche tempo, tra gli uomini più gagliardi di quelle generose regioni, una società segreta chiamata *Carboneria*, allo scopo di promovere e propugnare con ogni mezzo, a costo di qualunque sacrificio, l'indipendenza e l'unità della patria. Il giorno prima del congresso di Vienna, essa contava, nel suo seno, circa 800,000 membri. Pochi giorni dopo, essa ne contava il doppio. Vi s'erano inscritti, e continuavano a inscriversi, cittadini d'ogni età e d'ogni condizione sociale.

Nei primi anni la *Carboneria* si limitò a un cauto e pa-

ziente lavoro preparatorio allenatore. Solo nel 1820 — fattasi alquanto adulta e formidabile per le sue ben coordinate e disciplinate forze morali e intellettuali, più che per il numero dei suoi aderenti — essa diè principio a quella serie di pratici ardui cimenti, che dovevano, dopo cinquant'anni d'eroismi e di martíri, culminare nella maggiore conquista civile del secolo: cioè nel ritorno di Roma all'Italia già ridiventata nazione una e indipendente, e nella conseguente caduta definitiva del potere temporale dei papi.

III

La rivoluzione del 1820 nel Regno delle Due Sicilie. L'Austria, con la forza bruta dei suoi soldati, impone la tirannide borbonica ai patrioti italiani lottanti per la libertà. Persecuzioni e condanne (1821).

Durante l'anno 1820 scoppiò una rivoluzione nel Regno delle Due Sicilie, dove la tirannide borbonica infieriva maledettamente, insidiando, coartando, strozzando ogni voce di libertà.

La mattina del 2 luglio 1820 i soldati e gli ufficiali distaccati a Nola e ad Avellino (la *Carboneria* era penetrata financo nelle file dell'esercito) insorsero gridando: "Viva la Costituzione! Vogliamo la Costituzione!"

Il grido ribelle corse fulmíneo per tutto il regno; scosse, elettrizzò le popolazioni; fu ripetuto ardentemente; parve il possente grido d'un oceano in tempesta.

La sera del 6 luglio 1820 si disse che il generale calabrese Guglielmo Pepe — patriota energico, risoluto, universalmente stimato — s'era messo alla testa della rivoluzione. Tale notizia aggiunse fiamme al foco. Nella notte stessa i più autorevoli Carbonari di Napoli si presentarono alla reggia e, in nome del popolo e dell'esercito, chiesero al re la Costituzione.

Ferdinando I rispose con la tipica burbanza dei tiranni. I Carbonari lo lasciaron dire. Quand' ebbe finito, gli voltaron dignitosamente le spalle e usciron fuori, silenziosi ma fieri.

Pochi momenti dopo, una folla immensa di cittadini e di soldati affratellati correva ruggendo per le vie della città.

Il Borbone udì, tremò, non potè dormire. Avanti l'alba, egli pubblicò il seguente proclama:

Essendosi manifestato il voto generale della nazione di volere un governo costituzionale, di nostra piena volontà consentiamo e promettiamo nel corso di otto giorni di pubblicarne le basi.

I rivoluzionari non si capacitarono, non s'acquietarono. Essi sapevano che nel 1812 Ferdinando I aveva pur concessa e poi abrogata la Costituzione in Sicilia. Pretesero quindi, da lui, garanzie più sicure, più concrete; e cioè: giurare la Costituzione sul vangelo di Cristo; dare al generale Pepe il comando di tutte le forze militari dello Stato; affidare a una Giunta provvisoria l'incarico di preparare la riunione del Congresso.

Il Borbone dovè fare di necessità virtù. Dovè cedere.

Così il generale Pepe, che si trovava a Monteforte, il 9 luglio 1820 entrò trionfalmente in Napoli.

E la sera stessa il poeta Gabriele Rossetti [1] cantava:

Giungesti alfin, giungesti,
o sospirato giorno!
Tutto ci brilla intorno
di nuova ilarità.
Redenzion di patria
in ogni fronte è scolta.
Non sogno questa volta,
non sogno libertà!

Il 13 luglio 1820, nella cappella privata della reggia, alla presenza del Pepe, della Giunta provvisoria, dei ministri e dei dignitari di Corte, Ferdinando I giurò solennemente la Costituzione, pronunziando un enfatico discorso che terminava così:

Onnipotente Iddio, che con lo sguardo infinito leggi nell'anima e nell'avvenire, se io mento, o se dovrò mancare al mio giuramento, tu in questo istante dirigi sul mio capo i fulmini della tua vendetta.

La commozione fu generale. Gabriele Rossetti, che

[1] Gabriele Rossetti — nato a Vasto (Abruzzi) nel 1783, morto a Londra nel 1854 — fu il padre di Carlo Dante Gabriele Rossetti, il celebre poeta e pittore inglese, fondatore della *Scuola preraffaellistica*.

aveva cantato in versi la Costituzione "promessa", salutò anche la Costituzione "giurata" con un inno profetico esprimente tutt'altro che fiducia nel giuramento del re borbonico, come si può vedere dalla strofa ch'io qui riporto:

Cittadini, posiamo sicuri
sotto l'ombra dei lauri mietuti;
ma coi pugni sui brandi temuti
stiamo in guardia del patrio terren.

Nella pace prepara la guerra
chi da saggio previene lo stolto;
ci sorrida la pace sul volto,
ma ci frema la guerra nel sen.

Gli avvenimenti di Napoli, intanto, avevano preoccupato non poco le teste coronate d'Europa. Francesco I imperatore d'Austria e i suoi colleghi di Russia e di Prussia, nel mese d'ottobre del 1820 si riunirono a Troppau, città della Slesia, per discutere intorno alla grave situazione. Non tardarono a intendersi tra loro e a stabilire il da fare. Ingiunsero a Ferdinando I d'abrogare subito, "possibilmente con mezzi conciliativi", la Costituzione da lui promulgata.

Ferdinando I fece sapere che la cosa non era possibile "con mezzi conciliativi".

Allora i tre monarchi s'unirono di bel novo nel mese di dicembre 1820 a Lubiana, capitale della Carniola, e questa volta insieme coi rappresentanti delle altre Potenze europee, "per rimediare (così dichiarò il principe Metternich, primo ministro austriaco) alle condizioni interne del Regno di Napoli".

Il Borbone scrisse loro "di soppiatto", pregandoli di chiamarlo al Congresso, dove avrebbe reso conto del suo operato e suggeriti i mezzi più efficaci per reprimere lo spirito liberale dei Napoletani.

Fu chiamato. E siccome la Costituzione da lui promulgata gl'inibiva d'allontanarsi dal regno senza il permesso del Parlamento, egli dovè giurare che, recandosi a Lubiana, avrebbe perorato la causa del popolo. Disse: "Difenderò nel Congresso i fatti del passato luglio; vorrò fermamente

per il mio regno la Costituzione; domanderò la pace. Così richiedendo la coscienza e l'onore".

Questo giuramento fruttò a Ferdinando I la bramata autorizzazione. Prima di partire, egli nominò suo figlio Francesco reggente del trono, col titolo di vicario. Ma giunto a Lubiana, s'affrettò a confessare che solo la violenza gli aveva strappato la Costituzione; che considerava nulli gli obblighi assunti verso i rivoluzionari; che l'occupazione militare del regno era l'unico mezzo capace di ripristinare e consolidare la sovranità assoluta della monarchia.

Gli unti del Signore ascoltarono e approvarono. E, in data 9 febbraio 1821, ordinarono, per mezzo del loro Metternich che amava gl'Italiani come il fumo negli occhi, l'immediato e pieno ristabilimento del governo borbonico nell'Italia Meridionale.

Il Parlamento napoletano rispose deliberando la guerra. Un esercito austriaco non tardò ad apparire sulla frontiera.

Gabriele Rossetti incitò l'Italia a insorgere tutta contro i nemici invasori.

Sorgi! Che tardi ancóra?
Tu dormi, Italia? Ah no!
Di libertà l'aurora
sui colli tuoi spuntò.
Sorgi, e raffrena il corso
d'esercito invasor.
O schiava dei tuoi schiavi,
fosti regina un dì!
Snuda l'acciar da forte,
ricingi l'elmo al crin;
sorgi: tra vita e morte
qui pende il tuo destin!

Ma grazie ai tradimenti del principe vicario, a cui i Napoletani avevano ingenuamente affidato la direzione della guerra, i soldati austriaci non incontrarono che poca resistenza. Essi facilmente poterono entrare nella città il 13 marzo 1821, e riconsegnare pomposamente a Ferdinando I lo scettro del dispotismo.

Il re spergiuro se ne valse subito, sfogando borbonicamente le sue basse vendette. Per mezzo di giudici compia-

centi servili abietti, egli condannò i migliori cittadini a morte, alla galera, all'esilio. Confiscò loro i beni. Sciolse l'esercito. Affidò la difesa del trono a parecchi battaglioni di mercenari svizzeri e a 35,000 soldati austriaci.

Gl'improvvisati birri stranieri compirono l'opera nefasta del tiranno, commettendo soverchierie, villanie, brutture orribili. Ferdinando I li mantenne nel Regno delle Due Sicilie fino a ch'egli, un bel giorno del 1825, non se n'andò, esecrato da tutti, all'altro mondo.

Il suo successore Francesco I, quantunque più grossolano bestiale feroce, non potè sopportarli a lungo. Eran di troppo peso. Avevano dissanguato l'erario e per conseguenza il popolo. Dovè quindi rassegnarsi a mandarli via, confortato dalla speranza ch'essi sarebbero ritornati alle prime nuove *pazzie* dei Carbonari.

IV

La rivoluzione del 1821 nel Piemonte. L'Austria, con la forza bruta dei suoi soldati, impone la tirannide dei Savoia ai patrioti italiani lottanti per la libertà. Persecuzioni e condanne.

L'esempio dei Carbonari napoletani fu seguíto dai confratelli piemontesi.

Nel gennaio 1821 gli studenti dell'Università di Torino si fregiarono i petti con le coccarde della Costituzione di Napoli, e improvvisarono nelle vie della città una dimostrazione inneggiante alla libertà.

La polizia aggredì i dimostranti, tutti giovani inermi, li malmenò, li costrinse a ritirarsi.

Siffatta coercizione, anzichè frenare, eccitò maggiormente gli animi.

La dimostrazione si ripetè a Torino e in altre città del Piemonte, e assunse carattere spiccatamente rivoluzionario ad Alessandria, ove i cittadini e i soldati insorsero (10 marzo 1821) gridando: "Viva l'Italia! Viva la Costituzione!"

Vittorio Emanuele I di Savoia, re di Sardegna, Piemonte e Liguria, "nemico delle idee liberali", piuttosto che cedere,

preferì abdicare (13 marzo 1821) in favore di suo fratello Carlo Felice che in quei giorni si trovava a Modena, affidando provvisoriamente la reggenza del trono al principe cadetto Carlo Alberto di Savoia-Carignano. Costui, incalzato dagli avvenimenti, la sera del 13 marzo 1821 promulgò la Costituzione; creò un ministero d'occasione con a capo il conte Santorre di Santarosa ch'era stato il *deux ex machina* della rivoluzione; promise di mantenere, e all'occorrenza difendere, tutte le concessioni fatte.

Ma Carlo Felice, nemico acerrimo, peggio del fratello, d'ogni libertà, appena saputa la cosa, montò in furia; lanciò da Modena un energico proclama, col quale dichiarò nulla la concessa Costituzione; comandò a Carlo Alberto di dimettersi immediatamente da reggente e recarsi a Novara, dove, sotto gli ordini del generale Sallier della Torre, si sarebbero adunate le milizie rimaste fedeli alla monarchia assoluta.

Il principe cadetto obbedì. E i Carbonari, che aspettavano da lui un atto di resistenza contro la dispotica imposizione del nuovo re, lo gridaron traditore.

Un esercito di 30,000 uomini, in gran parte austriaci, invase il Piemonte, sgominò i costituzionali, ristabilì il reazionario governo dei Savoia.

Carlo Felice, scimmiottando il Borbone di Napoli, si diede a perseguitare spietatamente i fautori della Costituzione. Due tribunali partigiani, da lui espressamente istituiti (uno per i civili, l'altro per i militari), condannarono più di mille persone a pene gravissime.

Santorre di Santarosa si salvò con la fuga. Egli morì quattr'anni dopo a Sfacteria, combattendo generosamente per l'indipendenza della Grecia.

Carlo Alberto, invece, se n'andò dapprima in Toscana, poi in Ispagna, dove si schierò contro il popolo che, come l'italiano, tentava sottrarsi al giogo della servitù. Ivi prese parte all'assalto del *Trocadero* (con la caduta di questa fortezza, rimase schiacciata anche la Costituzione spagnola); vi si distinse molto; rientrò così nelle buone grazie di Carlo Felice.

L'occupazione del Piemonte, intanto, da parte delle truppe austriache chiamate dai Savoia, durò fino al settem-

bre del 1823 e costò al pubblico erario, vale a dire alla povera gente, la considerevole somma di diciotto milioni di lire; senza contare le angherie, le estorsioni, le umiliazioni a cui la depravata soldataglia imperiale sottopose privatamente i cittadini che s'erano resi colpevoli soltanto d'avere amato e desiderato la libertà.

V

L'Austria, con la forza bruta dei suoi soldati, impone la propria tirannide ai patrioti italiani del Lombardo-Veneto lottanti per la libertà. Persecuzioni e condanne (1820–1821).

Se l'Austria infieriva tanto barbaramente contro gl'Italiani soggetti ai tiranni e ai tirannelli ch'essa semplicemente proteggeva, è facile immaginare com'ella infierisse contro gl'Italiani che il losco trattato di Vienna aveva gettato nelle unghie rapaci dell'aquila bicípite.

I Carbonari del Lombardo-Veneto avevano fin dal 1818 fondato a Milano un giornale intitolato *Il Conciliatore*. Ne era direttore Silvio Pellico, scrittore garbato, educatore d'alti sensi morali, patriota gentile e forte.

Lo scopo apparente del detto giornale era quello di "conciliare, nel campo letterario, non i leali coi falsi, ma tutti i sinceri amatori del vero"; lo scopo recóndito era quello d'additare agl'Italiani la via della redenzione.

I conti, però, erano stati fatti senza l'oste. Il governo austriaco (l'oste) aveva nel Lombardo-Veneto, oltre agli enormi contingenti di truppe armate fino ai denti, uno speciale servizio di polizia in cui predominavano — per numero, per furberia, per malvagità — gli agenti segreti e le spie d'ogni specie.

Esso, dunque — il governo austriaco — non tardò a conoscere "quello che si celava entro le questioni letterarie del *Conciliatore*". Il 3 settembre 1819 ne proibì la pubblicazione. Poi si mise a molestare odiosamente i fondatori, i redattori, tutti i cuori nobili, tutti i grandi ingegni che avevano avuto, o ch'erano sospettati d'avere avuto, un

qualche interesse, una qualche relazione col soppresso giornale.

Intanto scoppiava la rivoluzione napoletana. I Carbonari del Lombardo-Veneto non potevano rimanere insensibili. Palpitarono. Esultarono. I più arditi espressero apertamente la loro simpatia, la loro solidarietà per i fratelli del Sud; tentarono financo imitarli. Ma furono rapidamente sopraffatti dalla prevalente e prepotente forza dei dominatori.

Centinaia di cittadini, tra i quali lo stesso Pellico e molti dei suoi amici, furono arrestati, svillaneggiati, vituperati. Alcuni furono condannati a morte. Altri furono trascinati in catene allo Spielberg, cupa fortezza della Morávia, e ivi rinchiusi in luoghi angusti oscuri umidi luridi, e lasciati in custodia di aguzzini ignoranti zotici ringhiosi aggressivi come cani mastini. Altri fuggirono in terre libere e ospitali.

Il poeta Giovanni Berchet, ch'era stato uno dei più brillanti collaboratori del *Conciliatore* e uno dei più ardenti cospitarori, melanconicamente esclamava dall'esilio:

Sono immensi i guai d'Italia,
inesausto è il suo dolor!

Libertà volle; ma, stolta,
credè ai prenci; e osò commettere
ai lor giuri il suo voler.
I suoi prenci l'han travolta,
l'han ricinta di perfidie,
l'han venduta allo stranier.

Son disciolte le sue schiere;
È compresso il labbro ai savi,
stretto in ferri ai giusti il piè!

Dopo un certo tempo, i rinchiusi nello Spielberg ebbero commutata la pena di morte in quella del carcere per la durata di dieci, quindici, venti anni ciascuno. Le torture che vi soffrirono con invitta rassegnazione furono descritte "senz'odio" dal Pellico nel suo mirabile libro *Le mie prigioni*, che costò all'Austria l'esecrazione del mondo, mentre alle

vittime della di lei tirannide fruttò l'immortale qualificazione di "martiri del Risorgimento Italiano".

VI

Le rivoluzioni del 1831 nel Ducato di Modena e Reggio e nello Stato Romano. L'Austria, con la forza bruta dei suoi soldati, impone la tirannide d'un suo principe e la tirannide papale ai patrioti italiani lottanti per la libertà. Persecuzioni e condanne.

La reazione infuriò per dieci anni. Ma essa non potè spegnere il fervore di libertà che agitava i vulcanici petti degl'Italiani.

Schiacciata nel sud e nel nord, la rivoluzione scoppiava nel centro della penisola. Ciro Menotti, patriota di nobili e fermi proponimenti, era riuscito, con l'ausilio d'animosi e fidi compagni, a prepararla nel Ducato di Modena e Reggio, dove l'austriaco Francesco IV tiranneggiava tanto barbaramente, da inchiodare con ceppi e collari di ferro i prigionieri politici su tavolati di sotterranei resi micidiali dalla infiltrazione delle acque.

La rivoluzione, nel detto Stato, doveva scoppiare tra il 4 e il 5 febbraio 1831. Ma il 3 febbraio 1831 la polizia ducale, messa sull'avviso dalle spie, cominciò ad arrestare alcuni cittadini sospetti.

Ciro Menotti comprese che non c'era tempo da perdere. Bisognava agire sollecitamente ed energicamente. La sera stessa del 3 febbraio 1831 egli riunì in casa sua i capi congiurati, e con essi s'accingeva all'arduo cimento. Ma piombava all'improvviso l'austriaco Francesco IV al comando di ottocento soldati e due batterie.

La casa fu circondata, fucilata, cannoneggiata. I congiurati si difesero eroicamente, lungamente. Alfine, il numero e l'armi del tiranno ebbero il sopravvento.

Ciro Menotti, ferito, grondante sangue, fu fatto prigioniero insieme coi suoi compagni.

L'austriaco Francesco IV, pazzo di gioia per la vittoria

riportata, spediva, l'indomani, con una staffetta speciale, al governatore di Reggio, la seguente lettera:

Questa notte è scoppiata la rivoluzione. Mandatemi il boia.
FRANCESCO.

Laconismo cinico, mostrante l'idiotica pravità dell'uomo che pure i potentati d'Europa avevano creduto degno di governare un popolo come l'italiano!

Nel frattempo era scoppiata la rivoluzione anche a Bologna. La folla aveva staccato dal palazzo governativo e frantumato lo stemma pontificio, sostituendolo con la bandiera italiana bianca, rossa e verde; aveva scacciato dalla città il rappresentante della santa sede, dichiarando abolito il potere temporale dei papi; aveva nominato una commissione provvisoria, coll'incarico d'annunziare e preparare le elezioni politiche e formare un governo costituzionale definitivo.

L'ímpeto veemente della dotta Bologna era stato seguíto in un lampo da altre città dell'Italia Centrale. La Romagna, le Marche, l'Umbria si proclamarono libere.

L'austriaco Francesco IV ebbe paura; non si sentì più sicuro a Modena; fuggì accompagnato da uno stuolo di birri e dal boia e trascinando seco, in catene, Ciro Menotti "come ostaggio"; riparò a Mantova, città appartenente al Lombardo-Veneto e, per conseguenza, all'Austria, dove si mise sotto la diretta protezione del cugino imperatore.

Verso i primi di marzo del 1831, grossi eserciti austriaci invasero il Ducato di Modena e Reggio e lo Stato Romano; si scontrarono con i rivoluzionari, ch'erano, relativamente, esigui di numero, male armati, peggio disciplinati; li batterono senza sforzo; ripristinarono il potere dei tiranni.

L'austriaco Francesco IV potè rientrare nei suoi domíni il 9 marzo 1831, covando, in cuor suo, infernali propositi di vendetta.

Costituì infatti immediatamente un tribunale eccezionale, incaricato di giudicare tutti coloro che a mano armata "o con occulte trame" avevano partecipato alla rivolta.

Il primo ad essere condannato a morte fu Ciro Menotti. Il quale subì con virile stoicismo l'estremo supplizio (l'impic-

cagione) il 26 maggio 1831 su un bastione della cittadella.

Nello stesso giorno "perì di laccio" l'avvocato Vincenzo Borelli, colpevole d'avere compilato l'atto che dichiarava l'austriaco Francesco IV decaduto dal trono.

Più di cinquecento patrioti, cascati nelle gránfie del suddetto tribunale, furono condannati quali a morte, quali alla galera. E più di mille trovarono scampo prendendo la triste via dell'esilio.

Non meno crudele fu la sorte toccata ai rivoluzionari dello Stato Romano. Gregorio XVI (Mauro Cappellari di Belluno), papa cipiglioso, intransigente, nemico d'ogni umana libertà, riempì le carceri d'illibati cittadini; "adoperò senza risparmio il carnefice", e, a sostegno della tirannide da lui impersonata, mantenne nei suoi domíni, vale a dire nello Stato Romano, per ben sette anni e a spese dell'erario, parecchie migliaia di soldati austriaci. I quali non mancarono di compiere le solite gesta. Più orrende, anzi, per la semplice ragione ch'essi—quei barbari impenitenti—erano fanaticamente inebriati dalla certezza di combattere per l'onore e la gloria d'un principe del loro paese e del vicario di Dio in terra.

Così l'Italia ricadde più serva, più vile, più derisa di prima sotto il bastone dei tiranni interni ed esterni.

Così la *Carboneria* compiva nel campo attivo, infelicemente ma fecondamente, il suo nobile ciclo storico.

VII

Mazzini, Gioberti e altri grandi Italiani, con il loro apostolato di pensiero e azione, formano la nuova coscienza nazionale e obbligano i tiranni e i tirannelli d'Italia a concedere i benefizi della libertà ai popoli oppressi. Solo l'Austria, sprezzante e sfidante, s'ostina a opprimere, con sempre maggiore crudeltà, gl'Italiani del Lombardo-Veneto.

Ma non indarno la magica parola *libertà* era echeggiata alta e sonora per le rive del Tirreno, dell'Ionio, dell'Adriatico e per le cime degli Apennini e dell'Alpi, risvegliando, incitando, entusiasmando.

Non indarno migliaia di spiriti eletti avevano sublimemente sofferto il martirio e affrontata la morte per la patria.

Dalle sacre rovine rivoluzionarie del 1820, 1821 e 1831 sorgeva — nume possente, austero, solenne — Giuseppe Mazzini col fatidico motto della *Giovine Italia* da lui fondata a Marsiglia nel 1832: "Dio e Popolo, libertà, uguaglianza, umanità, indipendenza, unità"; sorgevano Vincenzo Gioberti, Alessandro Manzoni, Cesare Balbo, Massimo D'Azeglio, Francesco Domenico Guerrazzi, Giovan Battista Niccolini, Terenzio Mamiani, Antonio Rosmini, Giuseppe Giusti, Gino Capponi, Cesare Cantù, Niccolò Tommaséo, Giuseppe Montanelli, Federico Sclopis, Ignazio Petitti, Giacomo Durando, Carlo Cattaneo, Giuseppe Ferrari, Daniele Manin, Ruggiero Settimo, Camillo Benso di Cavour, Alessandro Poerio, Giuseppe Garibaldi e molti altri — filosofi, poeti, giuristi, economisti, statisti, storici, eroi — tutti filialmente rivolti, con la viva luce delle loro menti, con i vivi palpiti dei loro cuori, alla gran Madre. La quale si trovava ancóra nello stato miserando in cui Giacomo Leopardi — il poeta del dolore — l'aveva vista e scolpita, con folgoreggianti rime, in uno dei suoi magnanimi delíri lirici:

O patria mia, vedo le mura e gli archi
E le colonne e i simulacri e l'erme
Torri degli avi nostri,
Ma la gloria non vedo,
Non vedo il lauro e il ferro ond'eran carchi
I nostri padri antichi. Or fatta inerme,
Nuda la fronte e nudo il petto mostri.
Oimè quante ferite,
Che lividor, che sangue! oh qual ti veggio,
Formosissima donna! Io chiedo al cielo
E al mondo: dite, dite,
Chi la ridusse a tale? E questo è peggio,
Che di catene ha carche ambe le braccia;
Sì che sparte le chiome e senza velo
Siede in terra negletta e sconsolata,
Nascondendo la faccia
Tra le ginocchia, e piange.
Piangi, che ben hai donde, Italia mia,

Le genti a vincer nata
E nella fausta sorte e nella ria.
Se fosser gli occhi tuoi due fonti vive,
Mai non potrebbe il pianto
Adeguarsi al tuo danno ed allo scorno;
Che fosti donna, or sei povera ancella.
Chi di te parla o scrive,
Che, rimembrando il tuo passato vanto,
Non dica: già fu grande, or non è quella!
Perchè, perchè? dov'è la forza antica,
Dove l'armi e il valore e la costanza?
Chi ti discinse il brando?
Chi ti tradì? qual arte o qual fatica
O qual tanta possanza
Valse a spogliarti il manto e l'auree bende?
Come cadesti e quando
Da tanta altezza in così basso loco?
Nessun pugna per te? Non ti difende
Nessun de' tuoi? L'armi, qua l'armi: io solo
Combatterò, procomberò sol io!
Dammi, o ciel, che sia foco
Agl'italici petti il sangue mio.

Essi, i giganti sunnominati, sebbene discordi in alcuni punti fondamentali delle loro idealità (Mazzini, per esempio, voleva la repubblica con Roma capitale; Gioberti, la federazione dei principi, con a capo il pontefice; qualche altro, la monarchia con Carlo Alberto re), pur riuscirono, col loro fervido e perseverante apostolato di pensiero e di azione, a riaccendere la fede, a formare una nuova coscienza nazionale, a spingere i tiranni sulla via delle riforme, ad affrettare l'epopea della comune risurrezione.

Nel 1846 Giuseppe Giusti — il maggior poeta satirico del secolo — sintetizzava il supremo desiderio degl'Italiani coi seguenti versi:

Vogliam che ogni figlio d'Adamo
Conti per uomo, e non vogliam Tedeschi;
Vogliamo i Capi col capo; vogliamo
Leggi e Governi, e non vogliam Tedeschi.
Vogliamo, tutti, quanti siamo,
L'Italia, Italia, e non vogliam Tedeschi;

Vogliam pagar di borsa e di cervello,
E non vogliam Tedeschi.

Il 16 giugno dello stesso anno 1846, veniva eletto papa il cardinale Giovanni Mastai Ferretti, il quale assumeva il nome di Pio IX e iniziava il suo regno amnistiando i condannati politici, nominando segretario di Stato il cardinale Gizzi ch'era in fama di liberale, mitigando i rigori della censura preventiva sulla stampa, istituendo una *Consulta di Stato* in cui ciascuna provincia aveva i suoi rappresentanti, permettendo l'ordinamento della guardia civica, esclamando pubblicamente dalle logge vaticane: "Gran Dio, benedite l'Italia!"

La gioia dei patrioti fu immensa, come immenso fu lo stupore dell'Austria. Il principe Metternich fu udito bofonchiare: "Tutto mi sarei aspettato, fuorchè un papa liberale!"

Gli altri dominatori dovettero seguire l'esempio di Roma.

Il re delle Due Sicilie, Ferdinando II (successo a Francesco I morto durante il 1830), soprannominato "re Bomba" perchè troppo bigotto sospettoso ingiusto feroce, tentò resistere; ma una generale rivolta dei Siciliani, i quali costituirono un governo provvisorio sotto la presidenza di Ruggiero Settimo (gennaio 1848) e le sollevazioni di Salerno e di Napoli, lo costrinsero il 10 febbraio 1848 a promulgare una Costituzione rappresentativa.

La stessa cosa fecero Leopoldo granduca di Toscana (17 febbraio 1848) e Carlo Alberto (4 marzo 1848) ch'era successo nel trono di Sardegna a Carlo Felice morto durante il 1831.

Anche Pio IX, che da principio, a dire il vero, non intendeva compromettersi tanto, dovè alfine (14 marzo 1848), incalzato dagli avvenimenti, concedere una Costituzione.

Solo gl'Italiani del Lombardo-Veneto non potevano godere i benefici della libertà. Essi, anzi, erano trattati peggio di prima. L'imperiale governo austriaco, per mezzo dei suoi spietati agenti fiscali, li tartassava, li taglieggiava, li scorticava; per mezzo dei suoi soldatacci di presidio (quasi centomila), li intimidiva, li inviliva, li scherniva; per mezzo

delle sue spie e dei suoi birri assoldati tra i più brutti ceffi dei bassi fondi sociali, li insidiava, li diffamava, li gettava senza scrupolo nelle adunche mani dei carnefici.

La vita, in quelle due disgraziate regioni italiane, era diventata insopportabile.

VIII

Le rivoluzioni del 1848 in Italia. Milano insorge contro la tirannide austriaca e lotta epicamente per cinque giorni. La soldataglia del feld-maresciallo Radetzky (20,000 uomini di fanteria e di cavalleria con 60 cannoni da campo) fa strage d'innocenti: sotterra e arde adulti e fanciulli vivi; inchioda alle pareti bambini lattanti, ne infilza alle baionette e li porta in giro come trofei; oltraggia donne, le uccide, poi mozza e intasca le mani inanellate dei cadaveri; ruba, insozza, massacra, incendia, commette infiniti orrendissimi delitti. E il popolo milanese — eroico e vittorioso — risponde con civile generosità al male ricevuto. Venezia insorge anch'essa, scaccia gli Austriaci oppressori e ricostituisce l'antica Repubblica di San Marco.

Il 17 marzo 1848 alcuni cittadini milanesi si presentarono al feld-maresciallo Giuseppe Venceslao Radetzky governatore generale della Lombardia con pieni poteri civili e militari, per pregarlo di trattare più umanamente il popolo; ma furono accolti a fucilate, e molti uccisi, molti feriti, molti trascinati in carcere.

La misura era colma: traboccò. Per la città, la quale allora non aveva che un perímetro di 12 chilometri e non contava che 200,000 anime, corse un leonino fremito d'indignazione, foriero di tempesta.

Il Radetzky vide l'addensarsi delle nubi, il balenar dei lampi, l'oscuro pericolo che gli sovrastava; strinse le labbra, corrugò la fronte, pensò ai ripari.

Egli aveva in Milano ventiquattro battaglioni di fanteria e sei squadroni di cavalleria (20,000 uomini in tutto) con sessanta cannoni da campo. Fece immediatamente

chiudere e rigorosamente guardare le porte della città, per impedire che ai ribelli giungessero rinforzi dalla campagna; riversò gran parte dell'esercito e piantò i cannoni di grosso calibro nei quartieri centrali più irrequieti; comandò alla cavalleria di perlustrare fuori e dentro le mura, sciogliere gli assembramenti, frustrare ogni tentativo di dimostrazione; dispose insomma le cose da par suo.

I Milanesi, dal canto loro, non se ne stettero con le mani in mano. Lavorarono anch'essi alacremente. Nominarono, prima di tutto, un Comitato di Guerra presieduto dal mazziniano Carlo Cattaneo, uomo di bell'ingegno, probo integro onesto, educato alla scuola dell'insigne filosofo Gian Domenico Romagnosi che l'Austria aveva perseguitato nel 1821; poi — con pietre e legna, veicoli, botti, barili, sacchi pieni di terra, porte, finestre, mobili, balle di cotone e altra roba — costruirono in poche ore più di 700 barricate; s'armarono di vecchi schioppi (ai cittadini erano stati sequestrati dal Radetzky i fucili di nuovo modello); brandirono bastoni, tridenti, falci, accette, spiedi, coltelli, forchette. E, all'alba del 18 marzo 1848, suonarono le campane a stormo.

Rispose ben presto il rombo dei cannoni.

La guerra è, senza dubbio, la più triste conseguenza delle concitate passioni; è vita per vita; è carneficina. Ma non sempre (la Storia insegna) il cuore dei combattenti rimane chiuso a ogni senso d'umanità.

Nella lotta tra gli Austriaci e i Milanesi durata cinque giorni (dal 18 al 22 marzo 1848), i primi — i soldati austriaci — commisero, o, meglio, ripeterono con diabolica voluttà (maledetto vizio ereditario!) le efferatezze delle antiche orde barbariche; i secondi — i Milanesi —, invece, compirono atti d'eroismo in cui l'odio e il furore tacquero più d'una volta, per far posto alla compassione verso i nemici caduti.

Eccone le prove.

Il 18 marzo 1848 (le ostilità erano appena incominciate; gli animi, dunque, non erano ancóra inaspriti in nessuna delle due parti) alcuni manipoli di cavalleria austriaca, in perlustrazione tra porta Tenaglia e porta Vercellina, s'imbattono in tre carrozze trasportanti vecchi, donne e fanciulli,

i quali tentano sottrarsi con la fuga alla bufera che sta per imperversare sulla città. I soldatacci s'avventano contro le vetture, le fermano, frangono a sciabolate gli sportelli, ammazzano un cocchiere, apostrofano gl'innocui fuggitivi, li terrorizzano, li traducono al Castello "come fossero buona cattura di guerra", e ivi li maltrattano, li trucidano, ne bruciano i corpi. "Entratovi il sesto giorno (23 marzo 1848) — così Salvatore Mazza — con un'onda di popolo per esplorare, nel cortile di sinistra si presentò uno spettacolo raccapricciante: tra un'informe congérie di ceneri e di rottami, scernevansi le vestigia di tre carrozze, cerchioni e mozzi di ruote, cranî di cavalli, gambe e braccia umane staccate dai busti, bruciacchiate, calpeste!"

Altri soldatacci austriaci irrompono in una casa alla Cavalchina; mettono tutto a soqquadro; trovano timidamente nascosto con la propria famigliola un giovane ragioniere che non aveva avuto il coraggio di prendere parte all'insurrezione, e lo freddano con parecchie fucilate alla testa. La moglie del disgraziato, fuori di sè dal dolore, s'inginocchia ai piedi dei carnefici e, singhiozzando, implora pietà almeno per la bambina che le sta al petto. I vigliacchissimi, per tutta risposta, sghignano satanicamente e scaricano i loro fucili sul viso dell'innocente creaturina!

Altri soldatacci austriaci penetrano nella canonica di San Bartolomeo; vi manomettono ogni cosa; insultano e fanno "prigionieri" tutti coloro che incontrano; sorprendono in una cameretta il parroco che, solo silenzioso raccolto, sta scrivendo una predica quaresimale per i suoi fedeli; lo scherniscono bestemmiando; lo ghermiscono per il collo, lo scotono, lo squassano, lo scaraventano al suolo, lo straziano orrendamente con i calci dei fucili e le punte delle baionette!

Altri soldatacci austriaci invadono il setificio Fortis; lo rovistano, lo disordinano, lo scompigliano, guastano le macchine, spezzano i telai, insudiciano e sbrindellano le stoffe, ammazzano i lavoranti, passano negli appartamenti privati, rompono i mobili, scassinano e rapinano gli scrigni pieni di contante e di gioielli, ammazzano altre persone, scendono nelle cantine, bucano le botti, trincano, s'ubriacano. E quando la sera si ritirano, carichi del denaro e degli oggetti

preziosi rubati e con le facce, le mani, le monture coperte di polvere e intrise di sangue, i ladroni assassini non lasciano alle loro spalle che mucchi di rovine e di cadaveri!

Altri soldatacci austriaci il 19 marzo 1848 corrono, spumanti di rabbia, in una casa dalla quale sospettano che sieno state tirate alcune sassate contro di loro; imprecano, strillano, schiamazzano, atterrano le porte, fracassano i mobili, uccidono i primi innocenti che incontrano, dichiarano "prigionieri" quelli che restano miracolosamente vivi, li incatenano, li insultano, li precipitano dalle scale; poi abbattono la porta d'un'attigua botteguccia da calzolaio, saltano addosso a una povera vecchia ottuagenaria paralitica (la madre del calzolazio) che sviene istantaneamente dalla paura, la rotolano sul pavimento, la calpestano, la riducono un cencio!

Altri soldatacci austriaci, anche fuori Porta Tenaglia, arrestano una diligenza diretta a Saronno, ammazzano i cavalli e il cocchiere a colpi di fucile, trascinano i nove passeggieri in un vicino orto e ivi li sotterrano vivi!

Altri soldatacci austriaci, mentre commettono ogni sorta di stragi nelle vie Sambuco e Scaldasole, s'introducono in una casuccia, vi trovano un uomo mezzo infermo, lo tempestano di pugni e di calci, e poi lo crocifiggono con chiodi a una parete!

Altri soldatacci austriaci assalgono, tra il corso di Porta Comasina e la via Santa Teresa, una casa nella quale si son rifugiate cinque donne; la saccheggiano, l'incendiano, spingono brutalmente nelle fiamme le tre donne più anziane che invano si dibattono per salvarsi, e le ardono vive; poi afferrano le due più giovani, le legano con le braccia dietro le spalle e, durante la notte, le trascinano al prossimo bastione, le violentano turpemente, le appendono a un albero e, così penzoloni, le tormentano con parolacce, risatacce, sputi sul viso; le fucilano, le crivellano di ferite, tra rochi *urrà* di trionfo!

Altri soldatacci austriaci entrano nella casa di Giovanna Piazza e in quella attigua della vedova Caravati, e scannano il figlio e il fratello della prima e il figlio della seconda!

Altri soldatacci austriaci entrano in un cortile del vicolo

detto "Stretto Calasca", dove abitano parecchie famiglie operaie; s'avventano "come orde di sfrenate belve sulle prime persone che incontrano, e, senza riguardi di sorta a vecchi, donne o fanciulli, e non ascoltando nè grida nè preghiere, a calci, a pugni, a colpi d'ogni maniera, rovesciano a terra tutti; poi afferrano Giuseppe Gambaroni d'anni 58 ammogliato, Antonio Piatti d'anni 28 celibe e il sedicenne Giuseppe Belloni, li trascinano in un orto vicino e ivi, da uno all'altro — i soldatacci austriaci — se li gettano contro, urtandoli e ricevendoli a colpi di sciabola e di baionetta", mentre la moglie del Gambaroni e i genitori e le sorelle del Piatti e del Belloni, piangendo, invocano invano misericordia. Infine, per aumentare il tormento dei tre disgraziati e per meglio "godere" dello spettacolo, varî ussari austriaci, appositamente scesi dai loro cavalli, e fanti del reggimento Paumgarten, vanno in cerca di paglia, ritornano poco dopo con alcuni paglericci, buttano il contenuto di questi addosso ai tre malcapitati cittadini, e vi appiccano il fuoco. E allorquando i tormentati, agonizzanti, tentano con le loro estreme forze di sfuggire al supplizio, i soldatacci austriaci, urlando freneticamente, li rintuzzano nelle fiamme con le punte delle loro baionette e costringono i parenti delle vittime ad assistere all'orrenda scena!

Altri soldatacci austriaci entrano in una casa, odono un pargolo che vagisce, lo levano dalla culla, gli appoggiano le manine al muro, l'inchiodano "come fosse un pipistrello od altra bestia", e con un colpo di baionetta stendono morta a terra la madre!

Altri soldatacci austriaci infilzano alle loro baionette inastate altri bambini lattanti, e li portano in giro come trofei!

Altri soldatacci austriaci mozzano bianche e leggiadre mani di donne uccise, adorne di preziosi anelli, e se le conservano in tasca!

Altri soldatacci austriaci trucidano e bruciano intere famiglie di donne e di fanciulli, commettono altri orrendi misfatti e non solo nella città, ma anche nei sobborghi.

I Croati — così una narrazione inviata il 10 aprile 1848 da Milano a Venezia — infierirono, più che sugli uomini, sulle donne

e sui bambini. In una casa furono trovati tredici scannati, tra i quali una madre con due bambini in braccio, uno dei quali senza testa, l'altro con una baionetta confitta dal mento in su. Un altro bambino fu spaccato per lungo, e i due pezzi furono inchiodati alle muraglie. Un altro fu bagnato nell'acqua ragia e poi bruciato. Una bambina fu infilzata pel dietro e portata sulla baionetta in canna. A una donna fu cavato il cuore dal petto e poi cotto. Un bimbo di 40 giorni fu fatto a bocconi e cotto anch'esso.[1]

Quanta differenza dalla parte opposta, degna del latin sangue gentile!

Il seguente episodio (potrei narrarne molti, ma non lo faccio per amore di brevità e per ragioni di delicatezza facili a comprendersi) basterà da solo a dare un'idea della civile generosità con la quale il popolo milanese corrispose al male ricevuto.

I poliziotti, fin dall'inizio delle ostilità, avevano degnamente coadiuvato nelle gesta criminose i soldatacci austriaci. Ma una notte, mentre essi — i poliziotti — dalle finestre dei loro uffizi centrali "godevano" a sparare e uccidere le persone che passavano per le adiacenti vie, furono avvisati che gl'insorti stavano per arrivare, forti impetuosi vittoriosi. Gli sgherri impallidirono, tremarono, se la diedero a gambe come lepri e, nel fuggi fuggi, dimenticarono di chiamare il loro capo — un certo Bolza — che s'era ritirato in una stanza attigua per mangiare e poi dormire.

Questo Bolza — "un oriundo villano, piccolo adiposo deforme, che sentiva dello scimio e della tigre" — era stato per lunghi anni il più fido e zelante cagnotto dell'Austria e, come tale, il terrore della Lombardia. Egli aveva fatto malvagiamente condannare centinaia di patrioti a morte, alla galera, all'esilio; aveva crudelmente gettato centinaia di famiglie nel lutto e nella miseria. L'imperatore Francesco I, per siffatti servigi, l'aveva nominato conte. Ma il popolo lo detestava, l'esecrava.

Al clamore degl'insorti invadenti gli uffici polizieschi acclamando all'Italia, il ribaldo, che stava saporitamente

[1] Vedere, per queste incredibili mostruosità, i documenti conservati negli Archivî di Milano, i rapporti consolari, i giornali e gli opuscoli del tempo, nonchè *Le Cinque Giornate* dello stesso Carlo Cattaneo e di altri autorevoli storici.

sonnecchiando e russando, trasalì, allividì, affloscì; ma non perse tempo: raccattò e intascò i rimasuglioli della cena consistenti in un po'di pane e cacio (le anime di fango hanno sempre vivo e pronto l'istinto animalesco della propria conservazione), e corse a nascondersi sotto un mucchio di paglia. Fu subito scoperto e tratto fuori. Era sudicio. Aveva gli occhi stralunati. Batteva i denti. Bofonchiava. Si chiamava in colpa. Impetrava la grazia d'essere lasciato vivo, promettendo, in cambio, rivelazioni della massima importanza. Faceva schifo!

Gl'insorti rumoreggiavano. I più focosi volevano, senz'altro, sbranare l'aguzzino. I più calmi s'opposero. Allora si mandò per consiglio a Carlo Cattaneo. Il quale rispose con queste divine parole: "Se l'ammazzate, fate una cosa non giusta; se non l'ammazzate, fate una cosa santa". I membri del Consiglio di Guerra — Enrico Cernuschi, Giulio Terzaghi e Giorgio Clerici — s'affrettarono a confermare e corroborare la sentenza del loro magnanimo presidente, pubblicando e diffondendo il seguente manifesto:

Prodi cittadini! Conserviamo pura la nostra vittoria. Non discendiamo a vendicarci nel sangue di quei miserabili satelliti che il potere fuggitivo lascia nelle nostre mani. È vero che, per trent'anni, essi furono il flagello delle nostre famiglie. Ma voi siete generosi come siete prodi. Puniteli col vostro disprezzo!

Il 22 marzo 1848 le truppe austriache fuggono davvero, sconfitte, "portandosi in ostaggio parecchi cittadini legati innanzi alle bocche dei cannoni con le micce accese!"

L'umiliante tirannia dei barbari in Italia è finita. Le duecento campane della superba metropoli lombarda sonano a festa. La bandiera nazionale bianca, rossa e verde sventola trionfante e gloriosa sui pinnacoli del Duomo, sulle logge dei pubblici edifizi, ai balconi e alle finestre delle case private. I cittadini corrono per le vie e per le piazze, piangendo, ridendo, abbracciandosi, baciandosi, gridando: "Viva la libertà! Viva l'Italia!"

Subito dopo, il vice console inglese a Milano, Roberto Campbell, mandava a lord Palmerston una dettagliata relazione dei fatti. Dopo la descrizione delle atrocità

commesse dai soldati austriaci e degli atti di grandezza d'animo compiuti dal popolo milanese, la detta relazione chiudeva così:

Per ora è impossibile dare, in alcuna guisa, il numero approssimativo dei morti e dei feriti nei combattimenti di questi cinque giorni. Per effetto dei rigorosi ordini e del buon sistema del Governo Provvisorio (titolo ora assunto dal Municipio), regna qui la più perfetta tranquillità. Come si poteva aspettare, l'esuberante gaudio della riportata vittoria rese i Milanesi quasi deliranti. Ma non si commise eccesso di veruna sorta.

E l'*Allgemeine Zeitung* del 2 aprile 1848 pubblicava la seguente lettera inviatale da un suo speciale corrispondente *tedesco* da Milano il 28 marzo 1848:

Un tremendo cannoneggiamento coperse la ritirata austriaca, alla quale non si potè porre ostacolo. Allora finalmente divenne possibile riconoscere alquanto dappresso tutte le crudeltà che le truppe austriache eransi permesse. Nei rioni si rinvennero intere famiglie di vecchi, donne, fanciulli e lattanti orribilmente trucidati e mutilati. Dei cittadini incarcerati dagli Austriaci nel Castello, alcuni erano stati fucilati, altri condotti via in ostaggio. Ovunque si guardasse, si vedeva sangue. Ovunque si era saccheggiato e incendiato. Parecchi ragguagli di queste scelleratezze mi stanno sott'occhi; la mia penna rifugge dall'annoverarle. M'è più caro in ciò rimanermi al di sotto del vero, per passare all'opposta parte, onde mi viene un dolce conforto. Grande e sublime fu la condotta dei Lombardi; le prime vittorie furono da loro conseguite senz'armi; fu necessario sveller queste dalle mani del nemico, ed essi — i Lombardi — l'osarono e lo compirono. Onore al loro coraggio! Grande e sublime fu il modo in che essi usarono la vittoria; questa non fu macchiata da un solo atto di vendetta; tutti gli Austriaci feriti vennero dai Lombardi medicati e assistiti come fratelli; tutti i prigionieri furono accuratamente, ma con la più grande indulgenza, custoditi; essi non mancano di nulla. E, per dire tutto, l'essere più aborrito in Milano, il commissario di polizia — Bolza — che fu preso, ebbe salva la vita.

I Lombardi aggiunsero al disprezzo della morte, durante il combattimento, una sublime magnanimità. La Storia, che tutto giudica, ne tramanderà memoria ai posteri.

Anche i Veneziani erano insorti.

Essi avevano presentata al governatore austriaco una domanda di riforme firmata dallo statista Daniele Manin e dal letterato Niccolò Tommaséo[1], uomini di rare virtù civili e morali, assai stimati dal popolo.

Ma il governatore aveva risposto facendo arrestare e chiudere nelle buie segrete dei *Piombi*, e minacciare di grave pena, i due "audaci" firmatari.

Allora i cittadini avvamparono di sdegno, invasero l'arsenale, si fornirono d'armi e munizioni, corsero ruggendo alle carceri, atterrarono le porte, presero i due chiari patrioti, se li caricarono sulle spalle, li portarono fuori in trionfo, affrontarono le truppe degli oppressori, le costrinsero a sgomberare in fretta e furia la città, ricostituirono (22 marzo 1848) l'antica Repubblica di San Marco, nominando doge lo stesso Manin e ministro della Pubblica Istruzione il Tommaséo, respirarono, finalmente, al pari dei fratelli lombardi, le dolci áure della libertà.

IX

L'inno di Mameli. La prima guerra di liberazione. Gl'Italiani sono sconfitti per colpa di Pio IX e del Borbone delle Due Sicilie. Gli Austriaci nuovamente dominatori della Lombardia (1848).

Scacciati da Milano, da Venezia e da altre città del Lombardo-Veneto, gli Austriaci si rifugiarono nelle fortificazioni del quadrilatero Verona-Peschiera-Mantova-Legnago. E ivi si preparavano alla rivincita; si preparavano, cioè, a reprimere con nuove carneficine lo spirito politico d'indipendenza e d'unità che scaldava gl'Italiani, rendendoli sempre più gagliardi attivi irresistibili.

Ma Carlo Alberto, pressato da ogni parte, accorre con un esercito di 25,000 uomini in aiuto dei fratelli minacciati ancóra una volta dal prepotente imperialismo straniero. E nel varcare il Ticino (ultimi di marzo 1848), egli invita i

[1] Niccolò Tommaséo, insigne letterato, critico, educatore italiano di Sebenico (Dalmazia), autore del *Dizionario della Lingua Italiana*, *Nuovo Dizionario dei Sinonimi*, *Dizionario Estetico*, *Dell'Educazione* e di molti altri importanti lavori (1802–1874).

principi degli altri Stati d'Italia a voler partecipare con lui alla guerra santa, mentre il poeta ventunenne Goffredo Mameli infiamma gli animi col seguente inno fatidico:

Fratelli d'Italia,
L'Italia s'è desta;
dell'elmo di Scipio [1]
s'è cinta la testa;
dov'è la vittoria?
Le porga la chioma,
chè schiava di Roma
Iddio la creò.
Stringiamci a coorte,
Siam pronti alla morte,
Italia chiamò.

Noi siamo da secoli
calpesti e derisi,
perchè non siam popolo,
perchè siam divisi;
raccolgaci un'unica
bandiera, una speme;
di fonderci insieme
già l'ora suonò.
Stringiamci a coorte,
siam pronti alla morte,
Italia chiamò.

Uniamoci, amiamoci,
l'unione e l'amore
rivelano ai popoli
le vie del Signore;
giuriamo far libero
il suolo natio;
uniti per Dio
chi vincer ci può?
Stringiamci a coorte,
siam pronti alla morte,
Italia chiamò.

[1] Scipio: abbreviazione di Scipione *l'Africano*, il potentissimo guerriero romano che vinse Annibale il *Grande* a Zama (202 avanti Cristo).

Dall'Alpe a Sicilia
ovunque è Legnano [1];
ogn'uom di Ferruccio [2]
ha il core, la mano;
i bimbi d'Italia
si chiaman Balilla;
il suon d'ogni squilla
i Vespri [3] suonò.
Stringiamci a coorte,
siam pronti alla morte,
Italia chiamò.

Son giunchi che piegano
le spade vendute;
già l'aquila d'Austria
le penne ha perdute.
il sangue d'Italia
e il sangue Polacco
bevè col Cosacco
ma il cor le bruciò.
Stringiamci a coorte,
siam pronti alla morte,
Italia chiamò.

La penisola diventa tutt'a un tratto un vulcano in eruzione. Non s'ode che un grido: "Fuori gli Austriaci!"

Il granduca Leopoldo di Toscana è costretto dall'entusiasmo popolare a mandare ottomila uomini, tra regolari e volontari, sui campi del settentrione. Pio IX è costretto a mandarne diecimila. Ferdinando II delle Due Sicilie è costretto a mandarne sedicimila al comando del generale Guglielmo Pepe ritornato in Napoli dopo 27 anni d'esilio. I potentati italiani minori sono costretti a mandarne anch'essi in proporzione dei loro domíni.

I partenti, coi petti fregiati di coccarde tricolori, cantano l'inno di Mameli e altri inni bellici estemporanei esaltanti

[1] Nei pressi di Legnano, città della Lombardia, gl'Italiani sbaragliarono l'esercito di Federico Barbarossa il 29 maggio 1176.

[2] Francesco Ferruccio fu l'eroico difensore della Repubblica fiorentina contro le armi dell'imperatore Carlo V e del papa Clemente VII nel 1530.

[3] L'insurrezione della Sicilia contro l'insolente signoria francese (nel pomeriggio del 31 marzo 1282) passò nella Storia col nome di *Vespri Siciliani*.

la patria ed esecranti il nemico. E le donne spargono fiori sui passi dei figli, dei fratelli, degli sposi; fanno augúri; benedicono.

Si vincono i primi combattimenti. Si vince la battaglia di Goito (30 maggio 1848). La sera stessa si prende la piazza forte di Peschiera. La fortuna dell'armi arride ovunque al buon diritto. La Lombardia e Venezia, nel colmo della gioia, votano la loro annessione al Piemonte.

Ma questi fatti straordinari e imprevisti turbano i tiranni. Pio IX s'affretta a richiamare le sue truppe, col pretesto ch'egli, nella qualità di capo della Chiesa, non può partecipare a una guerra tra Cristiani. Il re delle Due Sicilie abolisce la Costituzione, inferocisce contro i cittadini, comanda anch'egli ai suoi soldati di ritornarsene immediatamente indietro.

I pusillanimi, disgraziatamente non pochi, obbediscono. Invece il generale pontificio Giovanni Durando e il generale Pepe, coi generosi rimasti fedeli alla causa nazionale, proseguono arditamente il loro cammino.

Non si può però evitare che la defezione del papa e del Borbone produca nelle file dell'esercito liberatore una certa demoralizzazione.

Radetzky ne profitta: e, spalleggiato dai generali Nugent e Welden, giunti sui campi lombardi con numerose truppe di rinforzo, prende l'offensiva, sconfigge gl'Italiani a Custoza, (15 luglio 1848); rientra da burbanzoso conquistatore in Milano (6 agosto 1848); obbliga Carlo Alberto a chiedere un armistizio e a rivarcare il Ticino; impone di nuovo sulle terre riconquistate il giogo della servitù.

Solo Venezia non è subito piegata a tanto danno. Essa ricostituisce la Repubblica e riaffida il dogato a Manin.

Il generale Pepe, con le "reliquie" dell'esercito meridionale, si trincera entro i confini della Laguna, e s'accinge a gloriosa difesa.

E i Viennesi, dopo una sanguinosa insurrezione, impongono all'imperatore Ferdinando I di cedere la corona al nipote Francesco Giuseppe.

X

I soldati austriaci, rientrati in Milano, s'abbandonano a ogni sorta di rapine e vandalismi. Il feld-marèsciallo Radetzky estorce "una taglia straordinaria di venti milioni di lire a 185 nobili e cospicui cittadini" (1848).

A Milano il Radetzky annunziò subito d'avere accentrato nelle sue mani tutti i poteri pubblici civili e militari; dichiarò la città in istato d'assedio; fece bastonare e fucilare quei patrioti eminenti che non avevano avuto il tempo o l'accortezza di mettersi in salvo; fece prendere a vergate persino donne e fanciulli; commise, com'al solito, soverchierie, vigliaccherie, delitti d'ogni sorta.

"Ristabilito così l'ordine", il barbaro maresciallo lasciò il campo libero alle sue truppe.

Queste si mostrarono degne del loro superiore. Ufficiali e soldati, in maggior parte croati e boemi, occuparono le case dei fuggiaschi, con preferenza quelle dei patrizi che s'erano distinti più degli altri nei giorni della rivoluzione: e le soqquadrarono e arraffarono dalle cantine alle soffitte; vi smattonarono i pavimenti di marmo; fransero gli specchi e i vasi; gettarono gli archivî nei cortili; lacerarono le tappezzerie; bruttarono i dipinti; fecero cucina nelle pinacoteche; bruciarono mobili, libri, pergamene d'inestimabile pregio; regalarono le vesti di seta e le biancherie di lino delle dame alle male femmine che li seguivano; intascarono tutto ciò che poteva essere intascato; s'abbandonarono a saccheggi, a vandalismi, ad orge più che bestiali. E non eran sazî. Volevan denaro. Pensò il Radetzky ad estorcerlo, imponendo una "taglia straordinaria di venti milioni di lire a carico di nobili e cospicui cittadini", dopo ch'egli aveva preteso dal popolo il pagamento di tributi raddoppiati e cento altre gravezze.

Ho determinato — così comandava per iscritto il tirannico maresciallo austriaco — che debbano essere sottoposti a contribuzione straordinaria i membri del cessato Governo Provvisorio; quelli che ebbero parte precipua nei varî cosidetti Comitati; coloro che si

posero alla testa della rivoluzione e vi hanno concorso colla loro opera e coi loro mezzi materiali o intellettuali.

I designati furono 185.

La militaresca galanteria austriaca impose a una signora — alla principessa Cristina di Belgioioso — la quota più alta: 800,000 lire. Seguirono immediatamente, con quote poco minori, il duca Visconti di Mondrone, il conte Vitaliano Borromeo e il duca Litta. La quota più infima a carico dei patrizi fu di 10,000 lire. I banchieri e i negozianti — come i Milius, i Mondolfo, i Ponti, i Raymmi, i Seufferheld — dovettero pagare 50,000 lire ciascuno. E 300.000 lire dovè pagarle perfino l'Ospedale Maggiore!

Si può immaginare lo stato miserando in cui si trovava la sventurata metropoli lombarda negli ultimi mesi del 1848.

XI

L'insurrezione di Roma. È ucciso il primo ministro pontificio Pellegrino Rossi. Pio IX fugge di notte a Gaeta. Proclamazione della Repubblica Romana con a capo Mazzini, Saffi e Armellini. La seconda guerra di liberazione contro l'Austria. Gl'Italiani sono sconfitti per colpa dei loro comandanti. Carlo Alberto è costretto ad abdicare in favore di suo figlio Vittorio Emanuele. Gli Austriaci, rimbaldanziti, estendono la loro tirannide sul Piemonte (1849).

Ma la sconfitta non iscoraggì gl'Italiani. Li rese anzi più arditi e alacri. Li ritemprò.

A Roma il popolo insorse contro il governo retrógrado di Pio IX che aveva tradito la causa nazionale; uccise (15 novembre 1848) il primo ministro Pellegrino Rossi che aveva preparato l'arresto e l'espulsione dei più noti agitatori patriottici; obbligò lo stesso pontefice a lasciare di notte la capitale e riparare a Gaeta, dove allora si trovava anche il re delle Due Sicilie; elesse un'Assemblea Costituente, la quale, dopo lunga e animata discussione, approvò e pubblicò (9 febbraio 1849) un decreto dichiarante il papato "decaduto

di diritto e di fatto dal governo temporale dello Stato Romano" e proclamante la Repubblica con a capo un triumvirato composto di Mazzini, Aurelio Saffi e Carlo Armellini (marzo 1849).

In Toscana il popolo fece reiterate dimostrazioni irredentiste; obbligò il granduca Leopoldo a seguire il transfuga vicario di Cristo nella sua corsa verso Gaeta; affidò la cosa pubblica a Guerrazzi, Giuseppe Montanelli e Giuseppe Mazzoni.

Nelle altre parti della penisola il popolo era del pari irrequieto; voleva novamente la guerra, la guerra ad ogni costo, a tutt'oltranza.

Noi vogliamo la guerra, la guerra,
finchè resti all'Italia un guerrier,
finchè i raggi dell'italo sole
segnin l'ombra d'un solo stranier.
(*Arnaldo Fusinato*)
finchè sia schiavo un angolo
dell'itala contrada,
finchè non sia l'Italia
una dall'Alpi al mar.
(*Goffredo Mameli*).

Carlo Alberto il 12 marzo 1849 dovè disdire la tregua concordata con gli Austriaci l'anno avanti; dovè riprendere le ostilità.

I novantamila Italiani ch'egli comandava erano forti, generosi, entusiasti, pronti a qualunque sacrifizio per il bene della patria. Scontratisi con l'esercito nemico, essi si batterono con ímpeto e resistenza mirabili; ma furono vinti il 21 marzo 1849 a Mortara e il 23 marzo 1849 alla Bicocca presso Novara, per l'inettitudine militare dello stesso re e degli altri comandanti. Una vera catastrofe!

Carlo Alberto si vide forzato a chiedere, come nel 1848, un armistizio. Ma le condizioni imposte dagli Austriaci erano così onerose e disonorevoli, ch'egli non potè accettarle. Allora non gli restò altro che abdicare. La sera, tardi, si raccolse coi figli e coi generali superstiti sotto le mura della fatale città (Novara), e ivi fece il gran passo, pronunziando le seguenti parole:

Ho sempre fatto ogni mio possibile per la causa d' Italia. Mi è dolorosissimo vedere fallite le mie speranze. Forse la mia persona è il solo ostacolo ad ottenere dal nemico un equo accordo. E siccome non vi è più mezzo di continuare la guerra, così rinunzio in questo istante la corona in favore di mio figlio Vittorio Emanuele, nella lusinga ch'egli possa conseguire migliori patti e procurare al paese una pace vantaggiosa.

A mezzanotte il vinto re, assumendo il nome di Conte di Barge, partiva tristemente per l'esilio, accompagnato da un solo servo. Si recò ad Oporto (Portogallo), dove morì quattro mesi dopo in un convento di gesuiti.

Il giovane re Vittorio Emanuele II s'incontrò immediatamente col Radetzky nel campo austriaco di Vignale. Egli dovè far buon viso a cattiva fortuna; dovè, cioè, firmare un armistizio, col quale s'obbligò di riconoscere nei vincitori il diritto d'occupare militarmente la città d'Alessandria e il territorio compreso tra il Po, la Sesia e il Ticino; s'obbligò di ritirare la flotta piemontese dalle acque dell'Adriatico spedita al principio della guerra, ciò che significava l'abbandono completo di Venezia nelle mani del nemico; s'obbligò di pagare—ed effettivamente pagò a pace conclusa—settantacinque milioni di lire come indennità di guerra.

Le catene furono così ribadite. Il grifagno uccellaccio degli Asburgo continuò a divorare il cuore degl'Italiani, proprio come l'avvoltoio del mitologico Prometeo!

XII

La "leonessa d'Italia". I soldatacci austriaci a Brescia "scagliano giù dalle finestre, contro le barricate erette dai cittadini, teste di teneri fanciulli divelte dai busti, braccia di donne e carni umane abbrustolite", e commettono altre incredibili scelleratezze. La tragica vendetta d'un giovane bresciano arso vivo (1849).

Le prime notizie giunte nel Lombardo-Veneto fecero credere che gli Austriaci, non gl'Italiani, erano stati sconfitti a Novara il 23 marzo 1849.

Si può immaginare l'esultanza dei patrioti.

Quei di Brescia s'armarono, inneggiando alla vittoria, e ingiunsero ai soldati austriaci di presidio (cinquecento in tutto; gli altri erano andati alla guerra) di sgomberare subito la terra che non era loro.

Gli Austriaci risposero mandando a chiedere in segreto urgenti aiuti; poi si rinchiusero nel castello sovrastante alla città, che in antecedenza avevano riempito di vettovaglie e munizioni, e da quell'alto propugnacolo cominciarono a scaricare fucilate e cannonate.

I Bresciani non si sgomentarono; affrontarono con animo risuluto e con polso gagliardo la lotta; pugnarono con ardore e valore persistenti; e già stavano per avere il sopravvento, quando piombarono da Verona i primi aiuti nemici: una colonna di truppa con numerosa artiglieria al comando del generale Nugent. Costui fece immediatamente sapere ch'egli doveva entrare per amore o per forza nella città. "Meglio, dunque, che i ribelli distruggessero le barricate erette, deponessero le armi, s'arrendessero a discrezione". Egli dava quattr'ore di tempo per la risposta, "mentre a stento frenava i soldati, e per misericordia faceva tacere i cannoni".

A siffatta tracotanza, i cittadini arsero di sdegno e gridarono procellosamente: "Si resista! Piuttosto che cedere, preferiamo perire tutti sotto le rovine della nostra patria!"

Nugent diè principio all'attacco. Egli si riprometteva di schiacciare in un batter d'occhio gli "audaci sudditi". Ma, invece, rimase schiacciato lui, cadendo trafitto in uno scontro. Fu subito rimpiazzato dal generale Haynan — una belva — con altre truppe di rinforzo.

Il nuovo comandante aggravò le intimazioni e le minacce del collega morto.

I Bresciani, irremovibili, risposero: "Libertà o morte!"

Scoppiò subito sulla città una tempesta di ferro e di fuoco. Ne seguì una strage di case e d'abitanti.

Ma i difensori non si spaventarono, non si smarrirono; sentirono invece sorgere e vibrare in ogni fibra dell'esser loro una potenza sempre più invitta; diventarono giganti; batterono più volte gli assalitori; compirono prodigi degni d'epopea. "Anche le donne si mostrarono virilmente ardi-

mentose; fra esse, due sorelle di onorata famiglia, più che di guerriere rendevano immagine di martiri cristiane".

Il dispetto rodeva gli Austriaci. L'orgoglio militaresco, di cui erano gonfî, non poteva sopportare più a lungo la fiera resistenza dei cittadini ch'essi consideravano "un branco di pecore". La mattina del 1° aprile 1849 effettuarono, in numero enorme, un assalto furioso selvaggio decisivo.

I difensori, sebbene impegnati duramente da parecchi giorni, tennero testa: combatterono corpo a corpo, contrastarono il terreno a palmo a palmo, profusero formidabilmente il lor vigore; ma alla fine caddero l'un dopo l'altro, l'uno sull'altro, coi petti squarciati. Allora, soltanto allora, il nemico, passando su mucchî di cadaveri, potè entrare nella gloriosa città che il poeta, più tardi, chiamò "leonessa d'Italia".

I soldatacci austriaci, imbestiati più che mai dalla resistenza incontrata e dalle perdite subíte, irruppero come lupi affamati nelle abitazioni rimaste immuni dal lungo bombardamento: e vi rubarono il meglio, distrussero il resto; sgozzarono malati, vecchi, donne, fanciulli; ne inchiodarono parecchi ai muri; infilzarono alle baionette inastate creaturine lattanti; ammazzarono a sciabolate, o sparando a bruciapelo, uomini e donne incontrati per via; ne trascinarono altri al Castello e ivi li gettarono nei sotterranei, li insultarono, li tormentarono, li trucidarono in massa; commisero infinite mostruosità.

E a stravolgere le menti, ad agghiacciar nelle vene il sangue, s'aggiungeva la vista delle orribili enormezze a cui, o ebbri o comandati o per natura stolidamente feroci, gl'imperiali austriaci trascorsero: cose che escono dai confini non pur del credibile, ma dell'immaginabile. Perchè non solo inferocirono contro gl'inermi, le donne, i fanciulli e gl'infermi, ma raffinarono per modo gli strazî, che ben si parve come le umane belve anche in ferocia pássino ogni animale. Le membra dilacerate delle vittime, essi—gl'imperiali austriaci—scagliavano giù dalle finestre e contro le barricate dei cittadini, come si getta ai cani l'avanzo d'un pasto. Teste di teneri fanciulli divelte dai busti e braccia di donne e carni umane abbrustolite cadevano in mezzo alle schiere bresciane,

a cui allora parvero misericordiose le bombe. E, sopratutto, piacevansi i cannibali imperiali austriaci nelle convulsioni atrocissime dei morti per arsura; onde, immollati i cittadini prigionieri con acqua ragia, li incendiavano; e spesso obbligavano le donne dei martoriati ad assistere a siffata festa: ovvero, per pigliarsi giuoco del nobile sangue bresciano, sì ribollente alle magnanime ire, legati strettamente gli uomini, davanti agli occhi loro vituperavano e scannavano le mogli e le figliuole. E alcuna volta (Dio ci perdoni se serbiamo memoria dell'orribile fatto) gl'imperiali austriaci sforzarono di fare inghiottire agli agonizzanti le sbranate viscere dei loro diletti. Di che molti morirono d'angoscia, e più assai impazzirono.[1]

Però un cittadino di nome Carlo Zima, arso vivo dai soldatacci austriaci, riuscì a vendicarsi del supplizio, e in una maniera oltremodo tragica.

Era lo Zima un giovane popolano, gobbo e zoppo, per conseguenza di fragile complessione, ma di spirito ribelle e gagliardo, che aveva pugnato giorno e notte com'un antico gladiatore. Alcuni soldatacci austriaci lo sorpresero mentre stava ancóra con l'arme alla mano. Che fecero? Gli versarono addosso una quantità d'acqua ragia, e l'accesero. In un baleno il corpo del disgraziato fu tutto in fiamme. E i soldatacci austriaci, sghignando satanicamente, si misero a riddargli intorno come pellirossi. Lo Zima, in un ímpeto d'estremo odio causato dallo strazio morale, più che dallo strazio fisico, si slanciò lesto com'una saetta sul caporione aizzatore di quegl'indemoniati, e l'abbracciò, l'avvinghiò, gli comunicò lo stesso fuoco, l'avvolse nelle stesse fiamme, lo costrinse a morire della stessa morte.

Gli Austriaci pretesero anche dai Bresciani un'indennità di guerra di sei milioni di lire.

Tante scelleraggini commossero e indignarono fortemente l'Europa intera. "Il generale Hayman, essendosi recato qualche tempo dopo a Londra, e avendolo la folla riconosciuto ai suoi gialli mustacchi, lo assalì con le scope, lo coprì di fango e di contumelie, gridando: *Dágli al beccaio austriaco! Dágli alla tigre!*"

[1] *Le Dieci Giornate di Brescia* di Cesare Correnti, insigne letterato italiano, autore di varie opere storiche, deputato al Parlaemnto nazionale, due volte ministro della Pubblica Istruzione, consigliere di Stato, segretario del "Gran Magistero degli Ordini cavallereschi", senatore del Regno (1815–1888).

XIII

I soldati austriaci in Toscana, a Bologna, ad Ancona. I tiranni stranieri schiacciano la Repubblica Romana gloriosamente retta da Mazzini e difesa da Garibaldi, e ristabiliscono il potere temporale dei papi (1849).

I primi di maggio del 1849 il generale austriaco d'Aspre, alla testa di ventimila soldati, invadeva la Toscana, assaltava paesi, spogliava e seviziava popolazioni, entrava arcigno tronfio pettoruto in Firenze (25 maggio 1849), e vi ristabiliva il potere del granduca. Costui, da misero tirannuccio asservito agli Asburgo, aboliva subito la Costituzione e la bandiera nazionale, e riprendeva a governare con i birri e gli ergastoli.

Quasi nello stesso tempo, quattro eserciti differenti (uno francese, uno austriaco, uno spagnolo e uno borbonico) marciavano contro Roma, allo scopo di schiacciarvi la Repubblica e ristabilirvi il potere temporale dei papi. I primi a giungere dinanzi alla città eterna furono i Francesi (più di novemila) al comando del generale Oudinot. Essi iniziarono immediatamente l'attacco a mezzo dell'artiglieria, mentre la fanteria tentava di scalare le mura. Ma Garibaldi — a cui i triúnviri Mazzini, Saffi e Armellini avevano saggiamente affidato la difesa della Repubblica — piombò fulmineamente coi suoi volontari e con quelli comandati dal dottor Masi e dal colonnello Galletti sugli assalitori, e li battè, infliggendo loro gravi perdite, prendendone prigionieri centinaia, mettendo in fuga tutti gli altri (30 aprile 1849).

L'esercito austriaco, dal canto suo, giungeva a Bologna e dava principio alle ostilità, assaltando la porta di Galliera. I Bolognesi respinsero l'assalto. I nemici misero in azione i cannoni e i mortai di cui erano abbondantemente muniti, e cominciarono a flagellare la dotta città con un'incessante gragnóla di proiettili pieni ed esplosivi. I Bolognesi si difesero valorosamente per più giorni. Ma il 16 maggio 1849 essi erano già esausti di forze; non potevano più resistere; furono costretti ad arrendersi.

Una settimana dopo, gli Austriaci attaccarono per terra e per mare Ancona. Questa sorella minore di Venezia lottò strenuamente per circa un mese; ma alla fine dovè anch'essa capitolare (20 giugno 1849).

L'esercito borbonico (sedicimila uomini) comandato da Ferdinando II in persona, aveva occupato Velletri. Garibaldi, alla testa di soli tremila volontari in parte ragazzi, corse ad affrontarlo: lo snidò dalla città, lo sbaragliò, l'inseguì fino ad Arca (12–20 maggio 1849).

Gli Spagnoli erano sbarcati a Fiumicino e a Terracina.

E il generale Oudinot, con quarantamila soldati e 36 cannoni d'assedio, la sera del 2 giugno 1849 riprendeva le ostilità contro Roma. La Repubblica non aveva a sua disposizione che novemila volontari in tutto. Ma essi erano cavalieri d'un alto ideale. Sulle loro fronti splendeva il pensiero onnipresente di Mazzini. Nei loro petti palpitava il vivo cuore di Garibaldi. La lotta fu lunga ed aspra; culminò durante la notte del 29 giugno 1849 in una grande battaglia. I difensori compirono gesta sovrumane. Cadde nobilmente il poeta giovinetto Goffredo Mameli che coi suoi inni aveva tanto infiammato a libertà il popolo d'Italia. Cadde Luciano Manara ch'era stato "il primo tra i primi" nelle cinque giornate di Milano. Caddero Enrico Dandolo, Emilio Morosini e mille altri. Ma tanto sacrifizio non valse a salvare la Repubblica.

Garibaldi dovè rassegnarsi a ringuainare la folgoreggiante sua spada. E il 3 luglio 1849, egli usciva dall'alma Roma, triste, silenzioso, povero (così povero, che, per le impellenti necessità della vita, era stato costretto a vendersi l'orologio), accompagnato dalla sua diletta consorte Anita incinta di sette mesi, e da circa quattromila superstiti, tra i quali il predicatore barnabita Ugo Bassi e il popolano romano Angelo Brunetti detto il *Ciceruacchio*, a cui l'Eroe non potè offrire altro che "fame, freddo, sole e marce forzate".

Partiva anche Mazzini per l'esilio. Partirono tutti i capi della gloriosa Repubblica.

E, il 12 luglio 1849, rientrava Pio IX nella capitale, scortato da Francesi e da Austriaci: e abrogava la Costituzione; annullava le riforme; riempiva di condannati politici le

carceri; avviliva le anime e i corpi; meritava che l'inglese lord Clarendon chiamasse il governo dei preti "un obbrobrio per l'Europa civile".

XIV

I soldati austriaci inseguono Garibaldi e Anita (la diletta consorte dell'Eroe) incinta. La fine dolorosa dell'Eroina. Sotterrata nuda! "La derelitta cagna, ramingando . . . " (1849).

Garibaldi, sottraendosi con rapide mosse ai nemici che rabbiosamente l'inseguivano, giunse in Toscana e cercò di sollevare quelle popolazioni; ma trovò dappertutto scoramento e timore. Allora gridò disperatamente ai suoi volontari: "Non ci resta che Venezia per morire!"

Ma come arrivare fino al Lido? Le marce forzate lunghe e faticose sotto la sferza del Sole; le imboscate dei segugi sguinzagliati dai tiranni per ogni dove; la fame, la sete, i dolori morali avevano ridotto i superstiti a 1500. E questi, per quanto animati ancóra da generosi sentimenti di patria, non erano davvero in grado d'affrontare nuove odissee. Garibaldi li condusse nella piccola Repubblica di San Marino, e ivi stipulò col nemico una tregua, in base alla quale i compagni potevano ritornarsene indisturbati alle loro case.

Egli, personalmente, non volle stringere alcun patto con l'Austriaco: preferì riprendere il cammino a cui la previdente e provvidente natura l'aveva predestinato.

I cento più arditi e più fidi, però, vollero seguirlo ad ogni costo. L'Eroe, ch'era gentile quanto invitto, non seppe schermirsi. Li accettò. E, con essi, tentò fuggire per mare. Ma le fragili barchette, sulle quali il sacro manipolo era montato, furon presto raggiunte dagli sgherri austriaci che stavano alla vedetta. Garibaldi saltò con la sua coraggiosa Anita nell'acqua: ed essendo egli un provetto nuotatore, non tardò ad accostarsi alla riva e salvarsi insieme con l'amata consorte. Invece Ugo Bassi, il *Ciceruacchio* e molti altri Garibaldini furono presi e giustiziati.

4 agosto 1849. L'ora del tramonto. Un baroccio a un cavallo, guidato dal capitano garibaldino Leggero, sale lentamente la strada che va dalla marina ai boschi ravennati. Sul tavolato del rozzo legno giace una giovine donna febbricitante.

"Coraggio!" le dice dolcemente Garibaldi che, travestito da contadino, le siede accanto carezzandole la fronte e tenendole sulla testa un ombrello aperto per ripararla dai raggi infocati del Sole. "Coraggio, mia buona Anita; a quelle case lassù domanderemo soccorso".

"O Giuseppe, io muoio!" balbetta impallidendo l'ammalata, mentre una schiuma biancastra le copre le labbra riarse.

L'Eroe le terge con un fazzoletto di seta la bocca. Una nube nera gli scende sull'anima.

Giungono finalmente nei pressi d'una casa poderale. Un contadino guarda sorpreso lo strano veicolo.

"In nome dell'umanità" supplica Garibaldi "salvate questa donna! Io non vi chiedo nulla per me; tutto per lei. La sete la brucia. Dateci un bicchiere d'acqua. Permetteteci di riposare un momento."

"Io non sono il padrone qui" risponde il contadino; "ma chiamerò la Ravaglia."

Esce dalla casa una contadina, la quale, scorgendo Anita tanto abbattuta, esclama commossa: "Povera donna! Viaggiare in tale stato! Fortuna che c'è qui il medico. Vado subito a chiamarlo."

Giunge il medico (il dottor Naldini), il quale osserva ansiosamente l'ammalata e sentenzia: "Questa donna è morente!" — Poi, fissando Garibaldi, soggiunge: "E voi, con codesto viso, con codesta barba . . . . voi siete Garibaldi!"

"Tacete, per pietà!" interrompe sottovoce l'Eroe. "Sapete bene ch'io son cercato a morte e che son puniti tutti coloro che m'aiutano. Non rivelate il mio nome."

In quel mentre giunge Stefano Ravaglia, padrone della casa. Si stabilisce con lui di portare Anita in una cameretta superiore, dove c'è un lettuccio appartato.

Con delicata cautela, l'Eroe prende e solleva nelle sue

braccia nerborute l'Eroina, e comincia a salire pian piano la scala. Ma, fatti pochi gradini, Anita reclina indietro la bella testa, dice flebilmente: "Giuseppe . . . , i figli . . . !" E muore.

L'Eroe torna giù, ripone al suolo l'adorato corpo, lo toccai lo bagna di lagrime, lo tempesta di baci, lo chiama coi nom, più santi e più soavi, dice disperatamente: "No, no, non è morta! Portiamola su. È uno svenimento. Ha tanto sofferto, povera creatura! Si riavrà. È forte. Non è morta, vi dico! È impossibile! Se fosse vero, sarei morto anch'io, perchè la nostra vita fu sempre una sola. Guardami, Anita, muovi le tue pupille, muovi le tue labbra, parlami!"

Tutti i presenti piangono. Il capitano Leggero si china rispettosamente sul Duce, e gli sussurra all'orecchio queste supplichevoli parole: "Alzatevi! Salvatevi! Per i vostri figli! Per l'Italia!"

"Soffoco!" esclama l'Eroe. "Datemi un bicchiere d'acqua!" — Beve, si rizza, rivolge un ultimo sguardo pieno d'amore e di dolore infiniti al corpo immobile della martire, e s'allontana singhiozzando com'un fanciullo. Sull'uscio si ferma ed offre un anello (l'unico suo tesoro), ch'egli aveva tolto dal dito d'Anita, al Ravaglia, per ricompensarlo dell'ospitalità accordata e per ricordo a un tempo.

"No," dice l'onesto contadino all'Eroe "tenetelo; esso è sacro per voi."

. . . . . .

L'11 agosto 1849, una "derelitta cagna, ramingando", scopriva un cadavere seppellito a poca profondità nella sabbia di Marina, parrocchia di Mandriole. Le autorità accorse riscontrarono trattarsi del corpo d'una donna incinta "che aveva i capelli tagliati alla *puritana* e portava la sottana e un *burnus*".

Il vestito fu esposto al pubblico, allo scopo d'identificare il cadavere.

E la magnanima consorte dell'Eroe dei due mondi fu risotterrata ignuda!

Pochi giorni dopo, un uomo di robusta complessione ma col viso stanco e mestissimo usciva dal paese di Modigliana.

Quell'uomo era Garibaldi. Frotte di soldatacci austriaci

masticanti bestemmie ostrogote gli davano caninamente la caccia. Vedendosi a un certo punto in imminente pericolo, l'Eroe si rifugiò in una vicina osteria. S'era appena seduto a un posticino appartato, quando entrarono rumorosamente alcuni Croati.

"Sono scoperto!" esclama l'Eroe tra sè e sè.

Ma i Croati non lo riconoscono. Essi vanno a sedersi a una tavola, e ivi cominciano a ordinare e ingollare vino senza misura. S'ubriacano. Gesticolano rozzamente. Ridono idiotamente, sconciamente. Ripetono con roca vociaccia: "Ah, *Garibalda*, *Garibalda*, noi ti scoveremo, noi ti prenderemo in trappola! Ah, ah, ah!"

L'Eroe spicca un salto da leopardo verso l'uscio, e via di corsa per i campi. Invano gli Austriaci tentano d'inseguirlo. Le loro gambe, paralizzate dal vino, si piegano. I loro corpi cascano a terra e grufolano come porci.

Dopo traversie inenarrabili, dopo indicibili sofferenze, l'Eroe giunse a Nizza, sua città nativa, abbracciò la madre ottantaquattrenne, baciò i figliuoletti, pianse con loro la perdita d'Anita, poi con l'anima lacerata partì per l'esilio, imbarcandosi su una nave diretta a Tunisi. Il Bey lo respinse, non volendo impicci. Allora l'Eroe vagò dalla Maddalena[1] a Gibilterra, da Gibilterra a Tangeri; finchè un giorno salpò per New York, dove fu fraternamente accolto dall'italiano Antonio Meucci, il defraudato inventore del telefono che oggi porta il nome di Bell.

XV

Gli Austriaci assediano e bombardano per tre mesi di continuo Venezia. Il feld-maresciallo Radetzky scimmiotta Nerone. La regina dell'Adriatico è costretta dalla fame e dal colera, più che dall'armi nemiche, ad arrendersi. L'elegia del poeta (1849).

Quarantamila soldati austriaci con 150 pezzi d'artiglieria avevano assediato Venezia per mare e per terra. Il 24 maggio 1849, essi cominciarono a tempestarla di bombe e di razzi incendiari.

[1] La Maddalena è la maggiore delle isole nello stretto di Bonifacio (Sardegna).

Il feld-maresciallo Radetzky, volendo scimmiottare l'imperatore Nerone d'esecrata memoria, aveva invitato alcuni arciduchi austriaci ad assistere allo spettacolo della città italiana colpita in ogni parte dal fuoco e dalla morte. Vecchio barbaro rimbambito!

I Veneziani non si sgomentarono; si sentirono, anzi, più ingigantiti nel fisico e nel morale. Egregiamente guidati dal doge Daniele Manin e dal prode generale Guglielmo Pepe, essi contrapposero all'indurita crudeltà del nemico una resistenza formidabile.

La lotta durò a lungo; fu intensa e cruenta. La vittoria arrise più volte agli assediati. Sarebbe arriso a loro anche il trionfo finale, se, alla scarsezza d'armi e munizioni e alla mancanza quasi assoluta di viveri, non si fosse aggiunto il colera. Questo terribile flagello, non frenato dalle necessarie misure scientifiche, favorito dal poco e cattivo nutrimento, cominciò a fare strage immensa, specialmente tra le donne e i fanciulli.

Il 15 agosto 1849 il bollettino sanitario segnava 402 casi con 272 morti.

Una settimana dopo, l'indomabile morbo, coadiuvato dalla fame sempre crescente e dalle artiglierie austriache sempre più intense, aveva trasformato l'incantevole città dei dogi in un vero inferno dantesco. I difensori, oppressi dal dolore per la misera fine dei loro cari, avevano perduto ogni entusiasmo, ogni energia. Solo allora fu decisa la resa. Durante le trattative (23 agosto 1849), Venezia è immersa in un sepolcrale silenzio. Il poeta Arnaldo Fusinato, di guardia all'isola del Lazzaretto Vecchio, scrive, col cuore gonfio, i seguenti versi elegiaci:

E fosco l'áere,
il cielo è muto,
ed io sul tacito
veron seduto,
in solitaria
malinconia,
ti guardo e lagrimo,
Venezia mia!
Fra i rotti nugoli

dell'occidente,
il raggio perdesi
del sol morente;
e mesto sibila
per l'aria bruna
l'ultimo gemito
della laguna.
Passa una gondola
della città:
-Ehi della gondola,
qual novità?
-Il morbo infuria,
il pan ci manca,
sul ponte sventola
bandiera bianca!
Venezia! L'ultima
ora è venuta;
illustre martire,
tu sei perduta.
Il morbo infuria,
il pan ci manca,
sul ponte sventola
bandiera bianca!
Ma non le ignívome
palle roventi,
nè i mille fulmini
su te stridenti,
troncaro ai liberi
tuoi dì lo stame . . . .
Viva Venezia!
Muore di fame!
Sulle tue pagine
scolpisci, o storia,
l'altrui nequizie
e la sua gloria,
e grida ai posteri:
-Tre volte infame
chi vuol Venezia
morta di fame!
Viva Venezia!
L'ira nemica
la sua risuscita

virtude antica;
ma il morbo infuria,
ma il pan le manca . . .
Sul ponte sventola
bandiera bianca!
Ed ora infrangasi
qui sulla pietra,
finchè è ancor libera
questa mia cetra.
A te, Venezia,
l'ultimo canto,
l'ultimo bacio,
l'ultimo pianto!
Ramingo ed esule
in suol straniero,
vivrai, Venezia,
nel mio pensiero;
vivrai nel tempio
qui del mio core,
come l'immagine
del primo amore.
Ma il vento sibila,
ma l'onda è scura,
ma tutta in tenebre
è la natura:
le corde stridono,
la voce manca . . .
Sul ponte sventola
bandiera bianca!

Il 24 agosto 1849 l'olocausto era compiuto.

La gloriosa regina dell'Adriatico fu novamente ghermita dalla sozza aquila a due teste.

Il Manin, il Tommaséo, Guglielmo Pepe e altri eminenti patrioti furono costretti a imbarcarsi su navi inglesi e francesi, e prendere, al pari di Mazzini e di Garibaldi, la sospirosa via dell'esilio.

XVI

Il feld-maresciallo Radetzky e i suoi sguaiati ufficiali festeggiano a Milano il genetliaco del loro imperatore Francesco Giuseppe, provocando disonestamente e caricando brutalmente con la cavalleria e la fanteria il popolo inerme; bastonando patrioti; vergheggiando giovanetti e signorine sulle nude reni (1849).

Mentre Venezia agonizzava, Radetzky commetteva nuove infamie e Milano. Provocava i cittadini, per poi poterli punire.

Valga per tutti il seguente episodio.

Il 18 agosto 1849 ricorreva il 19° genetliaco dell'imperatore Francesco Giuseppe. Volendo il vecchio maresciallo festeggiarlo con chiassosa teatralità, ordinò per quella occasione lo sparo di parecchi colpi di cannone all'alba; l'addobbo dei balconi, delle finestre, delle piazze e delle strade con damaschi e festoni dai colori austriaci; una solenne funzione religiosa col canto del *Te Deum* nel Duomo; una pomposa parata militare e, per la sera, "illuminazione spontanea, sotto pena di giudizio statario agl'indocili".

Or ecco quel che accadde per le mali arti della prepotente ufficialità radeschiana, sapientissima nell'organizzare provocazioni.

A quel tempo esisteva in piazza del Duomo il Caffè Mazza, uno dei più frequentati della città. Dirimpetto ad esso abitava una certa donna di cattivi costumi, cara a non pochi ufficiali austriaci, i quali si raccoglievano di giorno e di sera davanti al detto Caffè, ed anche nell'interno, per gozzovigliare e per insolentire contro i pacifici cittadini.

La donna in parola aveva preparato, per commissione appunto d'alcuni ufficiali a lei devoti, un gran drappo con i colori e gli emblemi imperiali d'Austria, e, in quel giorno natalizio, l'aveva esposto a un balcone della sua casa.

Gli ufficiali austriaci — bevendo, fumando, ciarlando davanti al Caffè Mazza — si congratulavano con la mala femmina, che impudentemente stava al balcone, facendole

un'infinità di smorfie oscene che volevano essere graziosi sorrisi, mentre, d'altra parte, con certi loro caratteristici ghigni, beffeggiavano e provocavano i passanti.

In un baleno la piazza del Duomo fu piena di gente. Una fischiata, cento fischiate, un grido, cento grida di sdegno e d'imprecazione, una pioggia di nastri tricolori costrinsero la mala femmina a ritirarsi, portando seco l'abominevole drappo.

Gli ufficiali austriaci pareva non aspettassero altro: si slanciarono nella strada digrignando i denti; si fecero largo tra la folla a colpi di frustino; chiamarono la mala femmina al balcone e l'incitarono a esporre novamente il drappo. E quando questo riapparve, i prepotenti proruppero in evviva e battimani frenetici.

Lo sdegno e le imprecazioni della folla crebbero.

Allora giunse di corsa sul luogo uno squadrone di cavalleria con le sciabole sguainate e un reparto di fanteria con le baionette inastate. Si caricò furiosamente la folla inerme, senza riguardo nè a vecchi, nè a donne, nè a fanciulli.

Gli ufficiali austriaci, piantatisi sui marciapiedi coi frustini branditi in alto, minacciando e urlando come tanti energúmeni, forzarono i fuggenti a levarsi il cappello e a salutare il drappo; poi presero di peso la mala femmina, la misero insieme col drappo in una carrozza, e la portarono trionfalmente in giro per la città. E come se ciò non bastasse, arrestarono parecchie persone d'ambo i sessi e le accusarono di "scandalose dimostrazioni anti-politiche, insulti ai colori dell'Impero e alle cifre di giubilo verso Sua Maesta".

Il 22 agosto 1849, nella piazza del Castello, quindici patrioti (studenti, possidenti, negozianti, capibottega, semplici operai), dai 15 ai 50 anni d'età, furono pubblicamente sottoposti al supplizio della bastonatura. Legati, cioè, coi petti su appositi panconi, gl'infelici, nudi dalla testa alle gambe, ricevettero sulle parti posteriori dei loro corpi chi 30 chi 40, chi 50 colpi di bastone.

Tre adolescenti (Luciano Ferrandi d'anni 17 legatore di libri, Giacomo Trezzi d'anni 17 conciatore di pelli, Giacobbe Colombo d'anni 19 orefice), giudicati dai medici militari non abbastanza robusti per sopportare le bastonate, ricevettero,

in cambio, 30 colpi di verga il primo e 40 colpi ciascuno gli altri due sulle nude reni.

Le signorine Maria Conti fiorentina d'anni 18 ed Ernesta Galli cremonese d'anni 20, al cui onore avevano più volte ma invano attentato i sozzi ufficiali austriaci, "sostennero privatamente" l'atrocissimo supplizio, ricevendo anche sulle nude reni 30 colpi di verga la prima e 40 la seconda![1]

Altri 14 patrioti furono rinchiusi nelle carceri "in ferri e con digiuni a pane ed acqua".

E pochi giorni dopo, il direttore del Castello ebbe la sfacciataggine, l'austriaca sfacciataggine, di mandare al municipio di Milano "per il rimborso" la nota delle spese da lui fatte per l'acquisto dei bastoni, delle verghe, dell'aceto e del ghiaccio "usati nell'esecuzione dei condannati".

Così l'incanaglito Radetzky festeggiava in Italia il genetliaco del suo padrone l'imperatore Francesco Giuseppe!

Tanta scelleraggine scosse l'Europa intera. I giornali, massimamente il *Times* di Londra, pubblicarono articoli di fuoco contro il governo austriaco.

E il poeta Francesco Dall'Ongaro scrisse:

Lombardi, Veneti, Italiani tutti, dimenticate le vostre glorie, le vostre speranze, i vostri disinganni, i vostri errori politici; ma ricordate questo fatto, ricordate questo giorno, scrivetelo sulle mura delle vostre case, sulle piazze, nelle chiese, sul frontespizio dei libri, dappertutto. Chi può dimenticarlo è un vile! L'Italia stessa fu bastonata, vergheggiata, contaminata in quei trentaquattro pazienti. E l'Italia lo sa!

XVII

" L'imperatore degl'impiccati " (1851–1853).

Il Lombardo-Veneto, ricascato nelle grinfe degli Austriaci, espiò con tributi enormi, con vessazioni spietate, con tormenti atrocissimi l'amore di patria.

Ma nessuna forza, per quanto militarescamente bruta,

[1] La verga, d'avellano, grossa quanto un pollice, era fissata al polso del soldato aguzzino con un laccio di corame, affinchè egli potesse percuotere con la massima violenza la vittima. Se ne conserva ancóra una nel Museo del Risorgimento di Milano.

poteva comprimere il bisogno innato, tradizionale, vivissimo che della libertà sentivano gl'Italiani.

Giuseppe Mazzini, da Londra, coadiuvato da Saffi e da altri insigni esuli, incitava a nuove lotte i fratelli oppressi. Per cui sorsero segretamente società e comitati rivoluzionari dappertutto.

Naturalmente la polizia austriaca non dormiva: spiava, scopriva, inferociva.

Nel 1851, per esempio, essa arrestò l'operaio milanese Antonio Sciesa, sotto l'accusa d'avere congiurato, insieme con altri numerosi patrioti, ai danni del governo dominatore.

L'accusato fu invitato con untuose lusinghe a rivelare i nomi dei complici. Respinse l'invito. Fu minacciato, maltrattato, conquassato. Sopportò con pazienza eroica le sevizie. Fu condannato a morte. Ascoltò con fermo e decoroso contegno la sentenza. Gli fu offerta la grazia, purchè confessasse. La rifiutò. Fu dai carnefici condotto in catene presso la sua casa, nella speranza che l'idea della famiglia l'intenerisse, gli facesse amare la vita, l'inducesse a parlare. Non disse che due semplici parole dialettali: *Tiremm innanz!* (Tiriamo innanzi!) — E, trascinato al patibolo, affrontò tacito e impavido l'estremo supplizio.

Tra il 1852 e il 1853, poi, sugli spalti di Belfiore a Mantova, il capestro austriaco troncava la vita d'altri patrioti: Enrico Tazzoli e Giovanni Grioli sacerdoti, Carlo Poma medico, Giovanni Zambelli pittore, il veneziano Angelo Scartellini, Bernardo De Canal scrittore, il bresciano Tito Speri letterato e poeta, Bartolomeo Grazioli sacerdote, il conte veronese Carlo Montanari, Pietro Domenico Frattini da Legnano, il colonnello Pietro Fortunato Calvi da Briana di Noale (Venezia).

L'indignazione destata da tante nequizie fu grande. L'imperatore Francesco Giuseppe ebbe affibbiato il sinistro nomignolo di "imperatore degl'impiccati" che ancóra oggi gl'Italiani ripetono con maledicente dispregio.

Non meno bestiali si mostrarono gli altri tiranni e tirannelli della penisola obbedienti all'Austria. Basti dire che Carlo III, successo a Carlo II nel Ducato di Parma, fece bastonare a sangue trecento cittadini in soli quattro mesi.

E nel Regno delle Due Sicilie i più virtuosi e stimati patrioti liberali — come il letterato Luigi Settembrini, il filosofo Raffaele Conforti, l'economista Antonio Scialoia, il giureconsulto Giuseppe Pisanelli, gli statisti Silvio Spaventa, Carlo Poerio, Nicola Nisco, il Pironti, il Saliceti ed altri — furono trattati tanto scelleratamente, da movere a sdegno il mondo intero. Fu proprio allora che Guglielmo Gladstone qualificò il governo borbonico in Italia "la negazione di Dio eretta a sistema".

Insomma, dalle nevose Alpi all'isola del Sole, non si vedeva che un popolo ardente di libertà, martirizzato dall'Austria e da despoti arroganti, famelici, sanguinari che l'Austria imbeccava, aizzava, spalleggiava.

Un simile stato di cose durava da lunghi anni. Sarebbe durato chi sa quanto, se imprevisti avvenimenti non fossero sopraggiunti per moderarlo e affrettare, nello stesso tempo, l'unità della nazione e l'indipendenza per cui gl'Italiani lottavano e soffrivano da secoli.

XVIII

I bersaglieri alla guerra di Crimea (1855). Cavour al Congresso di Parigi (1856). L'alleanza con Napoleone III (1858). Le memorabili parole di Vittorio Emanuele II all'inaugurazione del Parlamento subalpino. L'*ultimatum* dell'Austria al piccolo Piemonte. L'inno di Garibaldi. La famiglia Cignoli fucilata dai soldati austriaci. I soldati papalini trucidano i patrioti di Perugia. Pio IX e il cardinale Pecci (più tardi Leone XIII) esaltano gli assassini. La terza guerra di liberazione vinta dagl'Italiani con l'aiuto dei Francesi (1859).

Niccolò I di Russia, tra il 1853 e il 1854, col pretesto di liberare dalla dominazione ottomana i popoli cristiani del Danubio, moveva guerra alla Turchia.

La Francia e l'Inghilterra, le quali sapevano bene che il fine occulto dello zar era quello di conquistare Costantinopoli, credettero necessario, a tutela dei loro interessi mili-

tari e commerciali, di contrastare l'agognata conquista: e presero le difese dei Turchi.

Camillo Benso di Cavour, col suo non comune discernimento politico, intravide nel detto avvenimento un'occasione fortunata per l'Italia; intravide, cioè, i benefici morali che sarebbero derivati agl'Italiani, se essi fossero intervenuti nella guerra d'Oriente. E ne profittò. S'accordò come meglio potè con gli alleati, e mandò in Crimea un esercito di 15,000 uomini, in gran parte bersaglieri, comandati dal generale Alfonso Lamarmora.

Alla Cernaia i soldati italiani si fecero onore. Tra l'altro, il 16 agosto 1855, essi salvarono da una pericolosa sorpresa l'esercito alleato, sostenendo bravamente l'urto di 60,000 soldati russi. E l'8 settembre 1855 si coprirono addirittura di gloria, battendosi gagliardamente sotto la pioggia del fuoco nemico alla presa della torre di Malakoff, ch'era il principale baluardo di Sebastopoli.

La Russia fu vinta. Nel Congresso tenutosi più tardi a Parigi, potè intervenire anche Cavour come rappresentante ufficiale del Piemonte, nonostante le ire e i maneggi dell'Austria. E nella memorabile seduta del 30 marzo 1856, il sagace ministro di Vittorio Emanuele II ebbe l'abilità di mettere sul tappeto la "questione italiana", denunziando con parola franca la preponderanza austriaca in Italia, cagione di tanti mali, e affermando esser dovere delle grandi Potenze, árbitre dei destini d'Europa, di schierarsi efficacemente dalla parte d'un popolo il quale non voleva altro se non la propria unità nazionale, libera da ogni tirannide straniera.

Il rappresentante austriaco, che la rabbia aveva gonfiato e arrossato com'un tacchino, fece le sue proteste. I rappresentanti degli altri governi, invece, espressero la loro simpatia per la causa perorata da Cavour. E sebbene il Congresso si sciogliesse senza una risoluzione concreta riguardo all'Italia, pure la Francia e l'Inghilterra non mancarono d'esortare l'Austria e i tiranni italiani ch'essa proteggeva — come il pontefice, il Borbone e gli altri minori—a volere introdurre nei loro governi quei miglioramenti che il progredire delle idee liberali rendeva ormai indispensabili.

D'altra parte Napoleone III meditava per conto proprio

l'abbassamento dell'Austria. Gli parve che, all'effettuazione d'un tale disegno, potesse benissimo contribuire il popolo italiano. Perciò, durante l'estate del 1858, egli ebbe a Plombiéres, nei Vosgi, un abboccamento segreto con Cavour. In esso furono gettate le basi d'un'alleanza franco-piemontese, in forza della quale le due parti contraenti s'obbligavano di combattere insieme l'Austria se questa fosse stata provocatrice di guerra, e, in caso di vittoria, annettere il Lombardo-Veneto al Piemonte.

Questo successo diplomatico, dopo le vittorie militari riportate in Russia, riempì di gioia e riaprì alla speranza il cuore degl'Italiani. Gli occhi della nazione si rivolsero ansiosi al governo piemontese. I patrioti più autorevoli, con articoli di giornali e con discorsi pubblici e privati, incitavano veementemente all'azione.

Francesco Giuseppe non seppe più contenersi; invitò Vittorio Emanuele II a frenare la stampa e gli oratori.

L'umile re piemontese, consigliato da Cavour, sdegnò d'obbedire all'intimazione del potente imperatore d'Austria. Non solo; ma nella solenne apertura del Parlamento subalpino (gennaio 1859) egli pronunziò, durante il prammatico discorso della corona, le seguenti significative parole:

> Il nostro paese, piccolo per territorio, acquistò credito nei consessi dell'Europa, perchè grande per le idee che rappresenta e per le simpatie ch'esso ispira. Questa condizione non è scevra di pericoli, perchè mentre rispettiamo i trattati, non siamo insensibili al grido di dolore che da tante parti d'Italia si leva verso di noi. Forti per la concordia, fidenti nel nostro buon diritto, aspettiamo prudenti e decisi i decreti della divina provvidenza.

L'assemblea scoppiò in frenetici applausi. Un entusiasmo guerresco vampeggiò subitamente per la penisola. Uomini di tutte le età, di tutte le condizioni sociali corsero festanti ad arrolarsi nell'esercito regolare piemontese o sotto Garibaldi già rimpatriato e autorizzato dal governo di Vittorio Emanuele II a formare e comandare un corpo di volontari chiamati *Cacciatori delle Alpi*.

L'Austria, sbuffante, impose al Piemonte un minaccioso dilemma: o il disarmo e il congedo dei volontari nel termine di tre giorni, o la guerra.

Il Piemonte non esitò sulla scelta: la guerra!

Allora una divina esultanza sfolgorò per i monti e per i mari d'Italia; trasmutò, quasi riplasmò prodigiosamente la coscienza nazionale; acciaiò i polsi. E, nei cieli sublimati dalla rinascente primavera, risonò marziale e possente il fatidico *Inno di Garibaldi*, poco prima scritto dal poeta Luigi Mercantini e musicato dal maestro Alessio Olivieri.

Si scopron le tombe, si levano i morti;
I martiri nostri son tutti risorti!
Le spade nel pugno, gli allori alle chiome,
La fiamma ed il nome d'Italia nel cor!

Corriamo! Corriamo! Su, o giovani schiere,
Al vento spiegando le nostre bandiere;
Su, tutti col ferro, su, tutti col foco,
Su, tutti col foco d'Italia nel cor!
Va fuori d'Italia, va fuori ch'è l'ora,
Va fuori d'Italia, va fuori, o stranier!

La terra dei fiori, dei suoni e dei carmi,
Ritorni qual'era la terra dell'armi!
Di cento catene le avvinser la mano,
Ma ancor di Legnano sa i ferri brandir.

Bastone tedesco l'Italia non doma;
Non crescono al giogo le stirpi di Roma;
Più Italia non vuole stranieri e tiranni,
Già troppi son gli anni che dura il servir.
Va fuori d'Italia, va fuori ch'è l'ora,
Va fuori d'Italia, va fuori, o stranier!

Le case d'Italia son fatte per noi,
È là sul Danubio la casa dei tuoi;
Tu i campi ci guasti, tu il pane c'involi,
I nostri figliuoli per noi li vogliam.

Son l'Alpi e i due mari d'Italia i confini,
Col carro di fuoco rompiam gli Appennini:
Distrutto ogni segno di vecchia frontiera,
La nostra bandiera per tutto innalziam.
Va fuori d'Italia, va fuori ch'è l'ora,
Va fuori d'Italia, va fuori, o stranier!

Sien mute le lingue, sien pronte le braccia:
Soltanto al nemico volgiamo la faccia,
E tosto oltre i monti n'andrà lo straniero,
Se tutta un pensiero l'Italia sarà.

Non basta il trionfo di barbare spoglie,
Si chiudano ai ladri d'Italia le soglie:
Le genti d'Italia son tutte una sola,
Son tutte una sola le cento città.
Va fuori d'Italia, va fuori ch'è l'ora,
Va fuori d'Italia, va fuori, o stranier![1]

Il 29 aprile 1859 un grosso esercito austriaco invase la Lombardia e il Novarese che le truppe italiane avevano abbandonato per ragioni strategiche. Dopo avervi commesso le solite violenze brigantesche contro le proprietà private e le inermi popolazioni, esso s'avanzò nel Vercellese coll'intento d'occupare Torino e poi spingersi fino al Moncenisio per sbarrare il passo ai Francesi. Ma le trincee italiane erette presso la Dora arrestarono la marcia del nemico; sconvolsero i suoi piani. E i Francesi poterono giungere in Italia non solo dal Moncenisio, ma anche dal Monginevro e da Genova, senza incontrare il menomo ostacolo.

La guerra entrò subito in una nuova fase.

Gl'Italiani, al comando supremo di Vittorio Emanuele II, erano 80,000. I Francesi, al comando supremo di Napoleone III, erano 200,000. E gli Austriaci, al comando supremo del maresciallo Guilay, erano 300,000.

Il primo scontro notevole ebbe luogo a Montebello, sulla riva destra del Po a oriente di Voghera, tra 22,000 alleati e 30,000 Austriaci. Questi ultimi furono battuti e costretti e ritirarsi di là dal fiume (20 maggio 1859).

Lo stesso giorno, essi si sfogarono vigliaccamente trucidando un'intera famiglia italiana. Ecco come Cavour narrò l'orribile delitto in un'apposita circolare ch'egli diramò subito dopo ai funzionari del Regno:

Il 20 maggio 1859, alquante milizie d'Austriaci campeggiavano le alture di Torricella, piccola città del Vogherese. Una partita

[1] Non riporto qui le ultime quattro strofe dell'*Inno di Garibaldi*, perchè esse furono scritte dal Mercantini nel 1860 per i fatti di Sicilia e di Napoli ch'io narrerò in succinto nel seguente capitolo.

d'essi, arrestato il custode del tribunale, incontrato per via, lo costringevano a servir loro di guida; penetravano, quindi, nella casa dei fittaioli Cignoli. Dopo le più minute ricerche fatte in tutte le parti di quella, per aver trovato una fiaschetta di piombo da caccia, menavano seco tutta la famiglia e alcuni contadini recatisi per caso alla fattoria. Condotti al comandante austriaco, che trovavasi a cavallo sulla grande strada, dopo avere esso scambiato poche parole con un caporale, ordinò ai prigionieri — erano nove — di scendere in un sentiero che correva parallelamente a quella. Avevano quegl'infelici fatto appena brevi passi, quando, dato dal comandante il segnale a un drappello dei suoi di moschettarli, otto cadevano uccisi e il vecchio Cignoli ferito a morte. Allora gli Austriaci continuarono il lor cammino sopra Casteggio; e il comandante, voltosi al custode del tribunale, lo licenziava, dandogli per salvacondotto una carta, sulla quale stava scritto il nome del *luogotenente maresciallo Urban*. Il vecchio Cignoli, cinque giorni dopo, moriva all'ospedale di Voghera. Simili enormità non abbisognano di commenti: è un assassinamento tanto vile, quanto atroce, e del quale altri esempi si potrebbero, al più, rinvenire fra i barbari e i selvaggi.

L'indignazione in Italia fu grande.
Guerrazzi scrisse:

La tomba dei Cignoli sia di pietra, alta e larga a mo' di piramide, di un pezzo solo e di granito. Si metta là, giusto nel luogo dove i Cignoli caddero atrocemente, quanto vilmente assassinati; sotto essa raccolgansi le reliquie loro; da parte di ponente pongasi questa iscrizione: *Sepolcro dei Cignoli.* Da parte di oriente quest'altra: *Tutta una famiglia — da tutta una gente trucidata — qui grida vendetta a Dio giudice — contro l'Austria assassina.* Dalla parte di tramontana s'incidano i nomi e gli anni degli assassinati. Da mezzogiorno, poi, quest'ultima iscrizione: *Fra gente italica e austriaca — in ogni tempo, in ogni loco — patto il sepolcro, tregua la morte.*

E il Niccolini scrisse un sonetto, nel quale, tra l'altro, diceva all'imperatore Francesco Giuseppe:

Quando nascesti s'oscurava il Sole,
fu spento in terra ogni benigno lume,
corse sangue il Danubio ed ogni fiume,
ogni madre si strinse al sen la prole.

. . . . . .

Quando morrai, già veggo il Sol più bello,
madri e spose danzar con piede alterno
sovra la tomba di sì vil flagello.

. . . . . .

Garibaldi, intanto, coi suoi baldi volontari, vinceva gli Austriaci ad Arona, a Varese, a Como e in parecchi altri punti (25, 26, 27 maggio 1859).

E i regolari italiani, coadiuvati dai Francesi, li vincevano a Palestro il 29, 30 e 31 maggio 1859.

Nei primi di giugno 1859, poi, si combatteva sui piani di Magenta una delle più ostinate e sanguinose battaglie di quella campagna. I Francesi, comandati dal generale MacMahon, erano 125,000. Gl'Italiani erano pochi (qualche divisione). Gli Austriaci, comandati dallo stesso Guilay, eran superiori al numero degli alleati. La battaglia cominciò alle 5 del mattino e finì alle 7 di sera (4 giugno 1859). Gli Austriaci dovettero fuggire precipitosamente e disordinatamente, lasciando sul terreno 12,000 tra morti e feriti e 6,000 prigionieri.

E Garibaldi volava sempre vittorioso fino al lago di Garda.

La città di Milano, sgombrata ormai dagli odiati Austriaci come il resto della Lombardia, proclamò ancóra una volta la sua annessione al Piemonte. E Vittorio Emanuele II, insieme con Napoleone III e gli eserciti collegati, vi entrava trionfalmente l'8 giugno 1859.

Le Marche e l'Umbria, soggette al papa, si provarono a rispondere anch'esse al movimento generale, ribellandosi. Ma furono sottomesse dall'esercito papalino composto da un'accozzaglia di mercenari stranieri bigotti e reazionari comandati dal generale Lamoriciére fuoruscito francese. A Perugia i patrioti italiani avevano formato un Governo provvisorio. I soldati papalini si preparavano a schiacciarlo. I membri del Governo provvisorio si rivolsero all'arcivescovo della città, cardinale Gioacchino Pecci (più tardi Leone XIII), pregandolo d'interporre la sua influenza per evitare che si spargesse sangue. Ma il cardinale Pecci (più tardi Leone XIII) non ascoltò le preghiere dei patrioti italiani. Così il colonnello Schmid, alla testa dei suoi feroci

papalini, potè trucidare a suo bell'agio i cittadini, compresi i vecchi, le donne, i fanciulli. Pio IX—il papa allora regnante — promosse lo Schmid generale. E il cardinale Pecci (più tardi Leone XIII) offrì a Dio una messa solenne in memoria e in onore dei soldati papalini caduti in quell'impresa da masnadieri!

Per siffatte infamie, Cavour mandò una vibrata protesta ai governi d'Europa.

Gli Austriaci, dopo la disfatta di Magenta, s'erano ridotti a mal partito. Il maresciallo Guilay veniva rimosso dal comando e rimpiazzato dal generale Hess. Si recava sul campo Francesco Giuseppe, per rialzare con la sua presenza il morale delle sue truppe alquanto abbattuto.

Il 24 giugno 1859 gli Austriaci (200.000 con 700 cannoni) occupavano baldanzosamente i colli di San Martino e Solferino nel Mantovano, decisi a riguadagnare il terreno perduto. Gli alleati, pronti a fronteggiarli, non erano che 160.000 in tutto. I Francesi, contro le posizioni di Solferino. Gl'Italiani, contro le posizioni di San Martino. S'ingaggiò la battaglia alle ore 7 del mattino. Si combattè con furore selvaggio, con tenacità tremenda fino alle 9 di sera. Gli Austriaci ebbero la peggio. Ne caddero più di 20.000.

Era il principio della fine per i tirannici dominatori. Era l'aurora della redenzione per gl'Italiani oppressi. S'inneggiò alla vittoria. Si fraternizzò coi Francesi. Si magnificò il latin sangue gentile.

Ma, all'improvviso, Napoleone III, che s'era mostrato tanto ardito e prodigo, cambiò d'idea per grette, pusillanimi preoccupazioni politiche; accettò la proposta d'un armistizio; s'incontrò con Francesco Giuseppe a Villafranca (11–12 luglio 1859). Ivi i due imperatori fissarono i preliminari di pace, che furono poi solennemente ratificati a Zurigo il 10 novembre 1859. In base ad essi, Francesco Giuseppe cedeva la Lombardia a Napoleone III: e costui, a sua volta, la cedeva (che ipocrita formalità!) a Vittorio Emanuele II. Il Veneto rimaneva all'Austria. I principi spodestati potevano ritornare nei loro domíni, purchè richiamati dal voto dei rispettivi popoli e senza l'intervento armato di stranieri. La penisola, compreso il Veneto, doveva ordinarsi in confederazione con a capo il pontefice.

Si può immaginare l'impressione prodotta dall'azione indegna di Napoleone III.

Ma le speranze non erano del tutto perdute. La fortunata clausola del non intervento straniero metteva nelle mani degli stessi Italiani l'unità della loro patria. L'Emilia e la Toscana non tardarono a profittarne, votando con solenni plebisciti la loro annessione al Piemonte, che diventava così un Regno di 12,000.000 d'abitanti.

Dall'altra parte il governo di Vittorio Emanuele II fu costretto a cedere la Savoia e Nizza (quest'ultima, città italianissima, patria di Giuseppe Garibaldi) alla Francia.

XIX

Garibaldi e i Mille conquistano gloriosamente le Due Sicilie (1860). Proclamazione del Regno d'Italia (1861). Si perde la quarta guerra di liberazione contro l'Austria per colpa dei comandanti. L'annessione del Veneto (1866). Villa Glori. I soldati mercenari del papa trucidano l'eroina romana Giuditta Arquati-Tavani e il marito e il figlio di lei. Mentana (1867). La presa di Roma e la caduta definitiva del potere temporale dei papi (1870). La nazione una e indipendente.

Gli avvenimenti svoltisi nell'Italia Settentrionale durante il 1859 ebbero una forte ripercussione nel Regno delle Due Sicilie, dove infuriava la tirannide di Francesco II di Borbone detto *Franceschiello* (il figlio di Ferdinando II, *re Bomba*, ch'era morto di morbo pedicolare da poco tempo), uomo debole, incosciente, quasi idiota, alleato e imparentato con la dinastia d'Austria (Francesco II aveva sposato Maria Sofia duchessa di Baviera, sorella dell'imperatrice Elisabetta, vale a dire della moglie di Francesco Giuseppe), contrario all'indipendenza italiana, persecutore ferocissimo dei liberali.

Contro di lui insorse Palermo (primi d'aprile 1860). Furono sonate le campane a stormo, nella speranza che insorgesse tutta la Sicilia. Ma, invece, accorsero le truppe, le quali riuscirono a reprimere prontamente, con borbonica violenza, la sollevata città.

La notizia dell'insurrezione palermitana, intanto, era giunta a Genova e aveva riscaldato potentemente gli animi dei patrioti meridionali ivi rifugiatisi. Si levò rapida un'onda di simpatia per i fratelli isolani insorti. Si decise d'accorrere al più presto in loro aiuto.

Il 6 maggio 1860, infatti, salpavano dallo scoglio di Quarto, ridente paesello della riviera ligure, i due piroscafi *Lombardo* e *Piemonte* con a bordo i mille argonauti della libertà, guidati da Giuseppe Garibaldi.

L'11 maggio 1860 i Mille sbarcarono a Marsala. Il Duce lanciò subito un proclama, col quale invitò i Siciliani ad armarsi contro il Borbone oppressore, e combattere per l'unità e l'indipendenza della patria.

Il grido dell'Eroe fu accolto con giubilo dagli ardenti isolani. E il numero dei Mille crebbe rapidamente.

Il 15 maggio 1860 i Garibaldini si scontrarono con l'esercito borbonico, composto di parecchie migliaia d'uomini, sulle alture di Calatafimi, e ingaggiarono con esso un fierissimo combattimento.

A un certo punto pareva che i volontari italiani dovessero essere travolti dai nemici, superiori assai di numero. Nino Bixio — il primo dei Mille dopo Garibaldi — che comandava l'ala destra, avvicinatosi al Duce gli disse: "Sarà bene ritirarsi."

"Che dite, Bixio?" rispose energicamente Garibaldi "qui si fa l'unità d'Italia, o si muore!"

E slanciandosi avanti con la fulminante sua spada in alto, l'Eroe comandò: "Alla baionetta!"

Il nemico fu sbaragliato.[1]

Da Calatafimi, Garibaldi marciò su Palermo, attaccò il nemico, lo sconfisse ed entrò da *Dittatore* nella città (26–29 maggio 1860).

Il 27 luglio 1860 il nemico fu sconfitto anche a Milazzo in una terribile mischia nella quale lo stesso Garibaldi dovè lottare corpo a corpo.

[1] "Calatafimi! Avanzo di cento pugne: se, all'ultimo mio respiro, i miei amici mi vedranno sorridere per l'ultima volta d'orgoglio, sarà ricordandoti; perchè io non rammento una pagina più gloriosa!" Così scrisse Garibaldi nelle sue *Memorie.*

In meno di tre mesi le truppe borboniche furono costrette a sgomberare la Sicilia.

E all'alba del 20 agosto 1860, Garibaldi sbarcava con i suoi in Calabria, piombava su Reggio e sconfiggeva ancóra una volta il nemico.

Tante vittorie suscitarono un vero delirio d'amore per l'Eroe e spinsero le forti popolazioni calabresi ad insorgere anch'esse contro i *regi*.

Poco dopo, sui colli di Soveria, presso Catanzaro, Garibaldi affidava alla Storia le seguenti memorabili parole:

Dite al mondo, che con poche centinaia dei miei prodi Calabresi ho fatto deporre le armi a dodicimila soldati borbonici!

Francesco II, atterrito, il 6 settembre 1860 se ne fuggiva da Napoli e riparava a Gaeta, mentre il grosso delle truppe rimastegli fedeli si rifugiava a Capua.

Il giorno dopo, 7 settembre 1860, Garibaldi entrava glorioso e trionfante in Napoli.

E il 2 ottobre 1860, egli debellava per l'ultima volta presso il Volturno l'esercito borbonico, forte di 55,000 uomini.

Intanto s'erano ribellate anche l'Umbria e le Marche, proclamando la loro annessione al Piemonte.

Il governo pontificio soffocò nel sangue la volontà dei popoli ad esso soggetti.

Accorse Vittorio Emanuele II con un buon nerbo di truppe, e sconfiggeva su tutta la linea i papalini (settembre 1860).

Subito dopo, il figlio di Carlo Alberto proseguiva per Napoli, per prendere possesso del Regno conquistato dall'Eroe dei due mondi.

Il 26 ottobre 1860 Garibaldi e Vittorio Emanuele II, entrambi a cavallo, s'incontrarono sulla strada di Teano. Un testimone presente alla scena asserì che il Duce, mettendo militarmente la mano al berretto, gridò: "Salute al primo re d'Italia!"

Certo si è che Vittorio Emanuele II giunse a Napoli e vi fu accolto con sommo onore.

L'Eroe, da parte sua, dopo ch'ebbe "donato un regno al

sopraggiunto re", se ne ritornava poverissimo alla sua isoletta di Caprera.

Compiutasi in tal modo l'annessione delle Due Sicilie, dell'Umbria e delle Marche, fu sciolto il Parlamento subalpino e si fecero le nuove elezioni generali, le quali compresero tutta l'Italia a eccezione del Veneto, che rimaneva ancóra sotto il dominio dell'Austria, e della cittá di Roma, che rimaneva ancóra sotto il dominio del papa.

Il primo Parlamento italiano s'inaugurò solennemente a Torino nel mese di febbraio del 1861. Esso proclamò subito la formazione del Regno d'Italia, conferì a Vittorio Emanuele II il diritto d'assumere per sè e per i suoi successori il titolo di Re d'Italia, espresse il voto che "Roma, reclamata dall'opinione nazionale, venisse al più presto restituita all'Italia".

L'anno 1866 l'Austria e la Prussia si disputavano la preminenza sulla Germania.

Non essendosi potute accordare con le buone, le dette due Potenze dovettero ricorrere alle armi.

Vittorio Emanuele II, coll'intento d'avere il Veneto, strinse un'alleanza offensiva e difensiva con la Prussia.

Quest'ultima, conformemente al trattato stipulato, aprì per la prima le ostilità contro l'Austria, invadendo l'Holstein.

Seguì Vittorio Emanuele II, dichiarando guerra alla comune nemica il 19 giugno 1866.

Il 21 giugno 1866 egli partiva per il campo: e, il 24 giugno 1866, s'azzuffava a Custoza con gli Austriaci. I soldati italiani si batterono virilmente come al solito; ma l'inettitudine dei comandanti fece loro perdere la battaglia.

Un colpo più grave s'aveva per mare. Presso Lissa, isoletta dell'Adriatico, la flotta italiana e quella austriaca s'erano ingaggiate in un'aspra battaglia. Gli equipaggi italiani fecero prodigi di valore. I capitani di vascello Foà di Bruno e Alfredo Cappellini, comandanti del *Re d'Italia* e della *Palestro,* si lasciarono con istoica impassibilità ingoiare dalle acque insieme con le loro navi, piuttosto che arrendersi. Ma il loro eroico sacrifizio non valse a nulla.

La insipienza e la viltà dell'ammiraglio Persano fecero vincere gli Austriaci (20 luglio 1866).

Garibaldi, che s'era avanzato nel Trentino, sbaragliando ovunque il nemico, e già s'apprestava ad assaltare e prendere la città di Trento, il 25 luglio 1866 ricevette improvvisamente dal governo di Vittorio Emanuele II questo telegramma: "Armistizio firmato; evacuate il Trentino".

Evacuare il Trentino, dopo ch'esso era stato bagnato dal sangue di 3,400 Garibaldini? dopo che quelle popolazioni avevano accolto con manifestazioni di giubilo le fiammeggianti camicie rosse? dopo il disastro di Custoza? dopo la vergogna di Lissa?

Dal campo s'alzò un ruggito leonino. I feriti si strapparono le bende, perchè preferivano morire, piuttosto che ritornare indietro. I volontari — ufficiali e subalterni — rimasti incolumi, spezzarono le spade e le baionette; altri si rotolarono per terra, furibondi, disperati, piangendo, imprecando.

L'Eroe vittorioso e glorioso non disse verbo. Rispose al re d'Italia con una sola parola: "Obbedisco!" — Ma quanta eloquenza, quanto strazio, quanta magnanimità in tale parola!

L'Austria, però, era stata terribilmente sconfitta dai Prussiani a Sadowa il 3 luglio 1866, e aveva perduto ogni speranza di predominio sulla Germania.

Francesco Giuseppe fu costretto a cedere il Veneto, ma non direttamente all'Italia ch'egli odiava a morte, sibbene a Napoleone III. E costui, a sua volta, lo passò agl'Italiani. La stessa commedia del 1859!

Così nei primi di novembre del 1866 il Veneto, dopo la lunga e nefasta dominazione austriaca, fu ufficialmente aggregato al Regno d 'Italia; ma coi confini di qua dall'Isonzo.

Dopo l'annessione del Veneto, gl'Italiani sentirono ancor più vivo il bisogno di conquistare Roma.

Garibaldi era il centro luminoso da cui s'irradiava e a cui convergeva l'agitazione nazionale per Roma. Egli meditava il modo di liberare la città eterna: liberazione

allora ostacolata dal governo di Napoleone III e, per riflesso, dal governo di Vittorio Emanuele II.

In un giro trionfale fatto per l'Italia, l'Eroe parlò alle popolazioni, dicendo loro della necessità suprema di liberare Roma. Ma mentre s'avviava verso il confine pontificio (23 settembre 1867), egli fu "arrestato" per ordine del governo di Vittorio Emanuele II, e tradotto ad Alessandria (Piemonte).

Grandissimo fu lo sdegno degl'Italiani. Per mitigarlo, il governo stesso fu obbligato a rimandare l'Eroe a Caprera "nominalmente libero, ma facendo sorvegliare l'isola da parecchie navi da guerra".

Dopo pochi giorni Garibaldi, con un miracolo di fede e di ardimento, riuscì a fuggire da Caprera e dirigersi verso l'Agro Romano, dove i suoi prodi volontari avevano già iniziato la guerra contro il papa.

Intanto anche il popolo romano aveva cominciato ad insorgere. Ma esso non aveva armi. Pensarono i fratelli Cairoli insieme con altri giovani patrioti (75 in tutto) a portargliele. I generosi, carichi di fucili, daghe e munizioni, passarono i confini dello Stato Romano e s'imbarcarono sul Tevere. Ma durante la traversata furono avvertiti che una insurrezione del giorno avanti in Roma aveva avuto un esito disgraziato. Allora il generoso manipolo si recò presso una cascina di Villa Glori situata a poca distanza dalla Porta del Popolo. Ivi fu subito assalito da 500 soldati papalini. La lotta, corpo a corpo, fu terribile. I volontari, gridando "Viva Garibaldi! Viva Roma!", fecero miracoli. Cadde coperto di ferite Enrico Cairoli. Caddero altri eroi. Ma i papalini furono respinti (23 ottobre 1867).

I patrioti romani, nonostante le avversità e la mancanza d'armi, persistevano nell'idea di fare qualunque sforzo per liberare la loro città dalla tirannide papale. Lo stesso giorno 23 ottobre 1867 quaranta d'essi si radunarono segretamente nel lanificio di Giulio Ajani situato in Trastevere, e ivi s'accingevano a concertare nuovi tentativi d'insurrezione.

Giuditta Arquati nata Tavani, la quale aveva tra i convenuti il proprio marito e un figlio diciassettenne, volle

trovarsi in mezzo a loro, col pretesto di sorvegliare il pranzo. Ella era ancor giovane e bella, di quella bellezza maestosa e imponente delle antiche matrone romane.

Mentre i patrioti adunati concretavano i loro piani, ecco giungere di corsa una compagnia di gendarmi a cavallo e un battaglione di zuavi pontifici con i fucili carichi e pronti.

I patrioti chiusero le porte del lanificio, le sbarrarono, si misero fulmineamente sulla difesa. Partirono i primi colpi. I papalini, per meglio sostenere l'offesa, entrarono in un vicino convento di monache, e dalle finestre di esso e dall'alto del campanile si misero a bersagliare la casa Aiani. I patrioti romani rispondevano bravamente. Giuditta Arquati, correndo da una stanza all'altra, porgeva munizioni ai combattenti, li animava, assisteva i feriti. E i valorosi, confortati da quel sereno eroismo, riguadagnavano il lor vigore, raddoppiavano la loro resistenza.

I 300 papalini che avevano dato il primo assalto, dopo due ore di lotta furono respinti e stavano per desistere da ogni ulteriore sforzo, quando ne sopraggiunsero altri 300.

La pugna si riaccese più furiosa di prima. L'eroica Giuditta stringeva la mano al marito, baciava i capelli al figlio giovinetto, mentre porgeva loro i fucili da lei stessa caricati; e a tutti infondeva coraggio esclamando: "Viva l'Italia! Viva Roma! Non cediamo e quegli assassini!"

I patrioti, esaltati dall'intrepidezza di quella donna indomita meravigliosa, tennero testa ai 600, come avevano tenuto testa ai 300; e più volte li ributtarono.

Ma arrivarono ai papalini altri rinforzi, mentre ai patrioti venivano meno le munizioni. Fu allora che, rallentato il fuoco dai difensori, gli zuavi riuscirono ad abbattere la porta ed entrare nella casa. Si combattè ancóra per le scale, sulle logge, nei corridoi, nelle stanze. Ma la lotta era ímpari; non potè durare a lungo. I papalini massacrarono i patrioti romani, "fracassando loro le teste, stritolando loro le ossa, gettandone pur taluni dalle finestre giù nel cortile".

Giuditta Arquati-Tavani, ferita in più parti del corpo, potè trascinarsi a qualche passo di distanza dal luogo dove agonizzavano suo marito e suo figlio. I gendarmi e gli zuavi

pontifici si diedero a colpire i due uomini sotto gli occhi dell'invitta donna, "e con colpi di baionetta sì fieri, che, trapassando i corpi dei caduti, si conficcarono nel muro e nel pavimento". Poi trucidarono, con più e più di quegli spietati colpi, anche l'eroina, la quale era incinta di varî mesi!

Saziatisi così di sangue, gli sgherri del papa vollero impinzarsi di cibo e inebriarsi di bevanda, e s'assisero cinicamente alla mensa che Giuditta Arquati-Tavani aveva apprestato per i suoi infelici compagni.

Due giorni dopo — 25 ottobre 1867 — Garibaldi vendicava a Monterotondo i martiri del lanificio Ajani, riportando sull'esercito papalino una splendida vittoria.

Ma il 3 novembre 1867 l'Eroe veniva anch'egli sopraffatto dal numero dei nemici (soldati papalini e francesi) a Mentana, vicino Roma, dopo una battaglia da titani: ed era costretto a ritirarsi.

Tale ritirata fu giudicata degna del primo stratega del mondo.

E la sconfitta di Mentana fu giudicata più gloriosa di tutte le vittorie riportate da Garibaldi durante la sua vita avventurosa.

Surse in Mentana l'onta dei secoli
dal triste amplesso di Pietro [1] e Cesare [2]:
tu hai, Garibaldi, in Mentana
su Pietro e Cesare posto il piede.

(*Carducci*).

Il 20 settembre 1870 i soldati italiani al comando del generale Raffaele Cadorna assaltarono Roma, aprirono una breccia tra Porta Pia e Porta Salaria, ed entrarono nella città.

Il millenario potere temporale dei papi [3] è crollato.

La figlia primogenita del mondo latino, ricostituitasi a

[1] Pio IX.

[2] Napoleone III.

[3] Pipino il *Breve* re dei Franchi nel 752 e poi anche re d'Italia, dopo avere aiutato il pontefice Stefano II nella guerra contro Astolfo re dei Longobardi, diede alla Chiesa Romana la *Pentápoli italiana* comprendente le città di Rimini, Pesaro, Fano, Sinigaglia e Ancona. Da siffatta donazione ebbe origine il potere temporale dei papi.

nazione una e indipendente, ha di bel nuovo Roma per sua capitale.

Il martirio di tutto un popolo — e di qual popolo! — ha dato i suoi frutti.

Il sogno di tanti pensatori e apostoli — da Dante a Mazzini — è ormai una realtà: una vivissima realtà.

PARTE SECONDA

I

Come Roma antica, sia durante la Repubblica che durante l'Impero, conquistò e latinizzò il Friuli, l'Istria, Trieste, Trento, il Trentino e la Dalmazia, e come fece del mare Adriatico un gran lago romano. La "Tavola Clesiana".

Friuli. Verso l'anno 185 avanti Cristo, alcune tribù transalpine, "per valichi malagevoli e per aspre foreste" (Cadore, Carnia, Carinzia, Carso), riuscirono a penetrare in Italia. Il Senato romano impose loro di "ritornarsene immediatamente ai paesi ond'erano venute, ricordando che le Alpi erano il confine naturale insuperabile, posto tra l'Italia e gli stranieri". Così narra Tito Livio nel suo ventinovesimo libro.

A quei tempi il Friuli — cioè la parte che comprende l'odierna provincia italiana di Udine e la parte su cui oggi sorgono Gorizia, Aquileia (o, meglio, le rovine d'Aquileia), Grado, Gradisca, Monfalcone, Cervignano — non era che una regione ancóra primitiva, abitata da audacissimi barbari. Essa progredì soltanto dopo che fu conquistata dai Romani. Questi sapientissimi colonizzatori, quanto invitti guerrieri, appena l'ebbero in loro mano, si misero a lavorarla con alacrità straordinaria, dando incremento all'agricoltura ed ai traffici. Insegnarono la loro lingua. Diffusero le loro leggi. Abbellirono parecchie borgate, trasformandole in città. Fondarono Aquileia (182–181 avanti Cristo) sulla riva occidentale dell'Isonzo, in una bassa e fertile pianura, e la fortificarono "per difenderla dai barbari che abitavano più su". *Opus Romanorum est Aquileia munitum adversus supra illam habitantes barbaros.*

All'epoca d'Augusto, Aquileia era cinta di solide mura per un circuito di oltre 22 chilometri; aveva un Campidoglio,

un tempio a Giove Ottimo Massimo e templi e Giunone, ad Apollo, al dio Isonzo, al dio Beleno e un acquedotto e fori, terme, circhi, teatri e più di 200,000 abitanti (alcuni storici dicono 500,000, altri un milione). Era in diretta comunicazione con Roma per mezzo della via Emilia (continuazione della via Flaminia), e col mare Adriatico per mezzo di canali navigabili con porto a Grado. Era la base militare dei Romani contro i bellici popoli del Settentrione a dell'Oriente, tanto che Augusto vi fissò il suo quartier generale nelle imprese contro i Pannoni, i Germani, gl'Illirici, mentre Giulio Cesare vi si era rifornito di truppe nelle guerre contro i Reti e gli Elvezi, com'egli stesso affermò nei suoi *Commentari.* Era un centro commerciale di primissimo ordine, dove affluivano giornalmente, da ogni parte del mondo, marinai, mercanti, schiavi con grani, olii, vini, pellicce, metalli e altri importanti prodotti. Era la sede d'una delle tre tesorerie d'Italia, dove si battevano in apposita zecca le monete d'oro imperiali: *Aquileiae percussae et signatae;* un privilegio, questo, che solo Aquileia — ricca d'ori, d'ambre e di pietre preziose — poteva godere dopo Roma. Era l'emporio della latinità. Era il baluardo raffrenante la cúpida irrequietezza barbarica al di là delle Alpi. Ed era anche un attraentissimo luogo di villeggiatura, dove convenivano genti d'ogni paese, perfino dall'Africa. Augusto e sua moglie Livia, e poi gl'imperatori Tiberio, Marco Aurelio, Diocleziano ed altri, non disdegnarono d'andarvi a passare l'estate. Augusto, anzi, durante l'anno 12 avanti Cristo, vi ricevette Erode re di Giudea. E Costantino il *Grande* vi sposò, nel 307, Fausta, figlia di Massimiano e sorella di Massenzio.

L'Istria e Trieste. Non meno alacri e prodighi i Romani si mostrarono nell'Istria — la penisola che sporge all'estremo nord dell'Adriatico e che va dalle foci dell'Isonzo all'insenatura del Quarnero — da loro conquistata durante gli anni 178–177 avanti Cristo [1]. Vi costruirono cantieri,

[1] Tra le primitive emigrazioni, conosciute col nome generico di Pelasgi, che dall'Asia si riversarono in Europa, una corrente abbastanza numerosa approdò alla terra che oggi si chiama Istria, e specialmente nel vasto seno che si stende davanti a Trieste. Ai Pelasgi si sovrapposero più tardi gli Etruschi. Finchè

sicuri punti d'approdo, fortezze. Tracciarono, com'essi soli sapevano tracciare, vie maestre litorali e montuose conducenti fin nel cuore della Carnia. Riedificarono parecchie città sullo stile architettonico di Roma. A Pola eressero le mura di cinta con porte solidissime, un tempio a Diana e un tempio ad Augusto con colonnati monumentali, l'arco dei Sergi, numerosi sepolcreti, un superbo anfiteatro di granito, giudicato inferiore soltanto al Colosseo di Roma sia per vastità (l'interno, nella sua forma elittica, misurava 140 metri di lunghezza e 110 di larghezza e poteva contenere 25,000 spettatori), sia per la maestosa bellezza artistica; ampliarono e fortificarono il porto, facendone una base navale di prim'ordine [1]. A Parenzo (*Parenthium*) eressero il Campidoglio, il Foro, i templi di Marte e di Nettuno e il recinto dei Comizi.

Ma a Trieste (*Tergeste*) i Romani vollero principalmente profondere i tesori materiali e morali di cui Roma non era mai avara con i popoli ch'essa sapeva a lei devoti. Vi costruirono un acquedotto, le mura di cinta, il Campidoglio, le Terme, l'Arena, un tempio a Giove e un magnifico porto militare, il più importante dell'Adriatico, quello che doveva servir loro di base nelle comunicazioni commerciali e nelle guerre col centro d'Europa.[2] Inscrissero la città alla tribù Papinia; la considerarono com'una continuazione

verso il 508 avanti Cristo vi giunse dalle foci dell'Istro (così a quei tempi si chiamava il Danubio) e dalla Tracia una grossa tribù di gente grecanica, la quale si sostituì ai primitivi abitatori, dando alla regione il nome d'Istria dal gran fiume d'onde essa tribù proveniva.

Questo ci assicura la tradizione.

Più tardi Strabone e Plinio ci designarono chiaramente i popoli che abitarono la regione istriana prima dell'occupazione romana. Essi furono i Celti, i Liburni, i Carnii e i Siapidi, con predominanza della razza celtica.

È quindi assodato che le primitive popolazioni dell'Istria erano etnograficamente conformate, come gli altri popoli d'Italia, da schiatte varie, unite più o meno dall'affinità, dalla lunga connivenza e dai bisogni comuni.

Trieste esisteva prima della conquista romana.

[1] Nelle rivalità tra Cesare e Pompeo, Pola parteggiò per Pompeo. Cesare, irato, voleva distruggere la città. Ma ne fu dissuaso dalla sua gentile figliuola Giulia. A memoria e a riconoscenza di tale atto, Pola fu da allora in poi e per molto tempo chiamata *Pietas Giuliae*.

[2] Nella colonna Traiana a Roma, fra i tanti bassorilievi ve ne sono due che rappresentano la Trieste dei Romani circondata da mura solidissime, con le rive guarnite, col porto diviso in due da un bel molo, all'estremità del quale sorge il faro sopra una torre alta e rotonda: e l'imperatore Traiano che s'imbarca per Roma, reduce da una vittoria riportata sui Daci.

della provincia veneta; la investirono degli stessi diritti di Roma, "così che i Triestini poterono, al pari dei Romani, partecipare alle elezioni dei magistrati della Repubblica e poi dell'Impero, di esserne eletti e di votare leggi"; ne fecero, insomma, l'espressione culminante della loro energia edificatrice nell'Istria, irradiante su vastissima zona la fecondità della sua esistenza.[1]

Quando Augusto divise l'Italia in undici regioni, Trieste, l'Istria e la Venezia formarono la decima regione italica: *X Regio Italica.* E le milizie triestine furono inscritte nella decima legione Apollinare. Proprio allora la città — grata d'essere stata inalzata dalle vittrici aquile romane ai più alti fastigi della ricchezza, della cultura, della civiltà: orgogliosa d'avere appartenuto e di appartenere come parte integrante alla più forte e più illuminata razza del mondo — incise nel suo stemma, su campo purpúreo, l'alabarda di ferro pervenutale da Roma: alabarda simboleggiante *l'Alma Mater* nel suo possente fulgore latino.

Trentino. Il Trentino è quell'incantevole paesaggio montuoso che s'incúnea tra il Veneto e la Lombardia, dividendo per una larghezza di oltre 100 chilometri queste due province italiane.[2] I suoi confini girano per 452 chilometri, dei quali 136 lo dividono dal Tirolo tedesco, 138 dalla Lombardia e 178 dal Veneto. Da Bolzano a Riva sul lago di Garda, esso è percorso dall'Adige, il rapido e impetuoso fiume cantato da Virgilio e da Dante, sulle cui rive sorge Trento (*Tridentum*), la più importante città del Trentino.

I primi abitatori di questa regione furono gli Etruschi, poi i Galli, poi i Romani. Dalla fusione appunto della razza quirita con la razza gallica nacque la razza italica propriamente detta.

I Romani, dopo ch'ebbero ai tempi d'Augusto assoggettato il Trentino, si misero con lena intensa a colonizzarlo,

[1] Giulio Cesare — che più volte combattè vittoriosamente contro le orde teutoniche irrompenti dalle Alpi, ricacciandole sempre alle loro sterili lande — estese e portò il confine d'Italia all'Arsia sul Quarnero. Da lui appunto la catena di montagne che serra l'Istria a settentrione, e che fu testimone delle gesta del gran capitano, prese il nome d'Alpe Giulia.

[2] In seguito al trattato di Vienna del 1815, l'Austria aggregò il Trentino al Tirolo tedesco, e d'allora in poi lo chiamò Tirolo.

finchè riuscirono a dargli un assetto economico e civile degno del loro imperio.

Tutto ciò è storicamente assodato. Pur nondimeno la romanità del Trentino fu sempre messa in dubbio dai nemici dei diritti nazionali italiani. Ogni dubbio, però, dovè tacere di fronte a un fatto inaspettato accaduto nel secolo scorso. Il 29 aprile 1869 (è questo il fatto) due contadini italiani, scavando in un campo vicino a Cles nel Trentino, trovarono una tavola di bronzo perfettamente conservata, contenente inciso un decreto in lingua latina, col quale Claudio, imperatore romano nell'anno 49 dell'éra cristiana, risolveva la disputa che da lungo tempo esisteva intorno alla nazionalità degli abitanti delle vallate dell'estremo nord delle province di Trento.

Ecco il testo del decreto tradotto in lingua italiana:

Marco Giunio Silano e Quinto Sulpicio Camerino, Cónsoli. A Baia il 15 di marzo, in un editto di Tiberio Claudio Cesare Augusto Germanico, fu proposto quanto segue:

Tiberio Claudio Cesare Augusto, Pontefice Massimo, con potere di Tribuno per la sesta volta, Imperatore per la undicesima volta, Console nominato per la quarta volta, Padre della Patria, dichiara:

Considerando che, proprio sotto il governo di Tiberio Cesare, mio zio, Pinario Apollinara fu mandato per regolare le vecchie controversie, delle quali la mia memoria ritiene solo quelle tra i Commensi e i Bergalei; e che il detto Pinario Apollinara, per l'assenza di mio zio da Roma, ed anche più tardi sotto il governo di Caio Caligola, neglesse di riportare, come nessuno domandò a lui di fare; ed essendomi stato conseguentemente riferito da Camurio Statuto che la maggior parte delle terre e foreste abitate dai suddetti popoli sono sotto il mio dominio: Io mandai il mio amico Giulio Planta, perchè, con l'aiuto dei miei procuratori e delle persone del vicino territorio, investigasse attentamente tutte le cose e rapportasse a me, com'egli effettivamente mi rapportò in un apposito memoriale da lui preparato; ed Io gli diedi l'autorità d'investigare e decidere le rimanenti materie.

Come alla legale condizione dei Naumi, Tuliassi e Sinduni, una parte d'essi è unita con i Tridentini, mentre un'altra non è unita. Sebbene l'origine di questi ultimi non sia abbastanza chiara per determinare se essi abbiano la cittadinanza Romana,

pure, in vista del fatto che essi sono così misti con i Tridentini e godettero il diritto di cittadinanza per lungo tempo, e che essi non potrebbero essere separati da quella splendida municipalità senza gran danno della medesima, Io permetto ch'essi rimangano in possesso del diritto ch'essi per lungo tempo credettero di possedere, e questo Io faccio volontariamente, per avere udito che, della maggioranza di detto popolo, alcuni furono soldati nel mio corpo di guardia, altri furono comandanti di truppe, altri furono membri di giurie e presero parte in cause trattate a Roma. Questi diritti Io dò loro, così che tutti loro possano, come cittadini Romani presso essi stessi e con i Tridentini o altrove, essere considerati legali e conservare i nomi da loro precedentemente adottati di *cittadini Romani.*

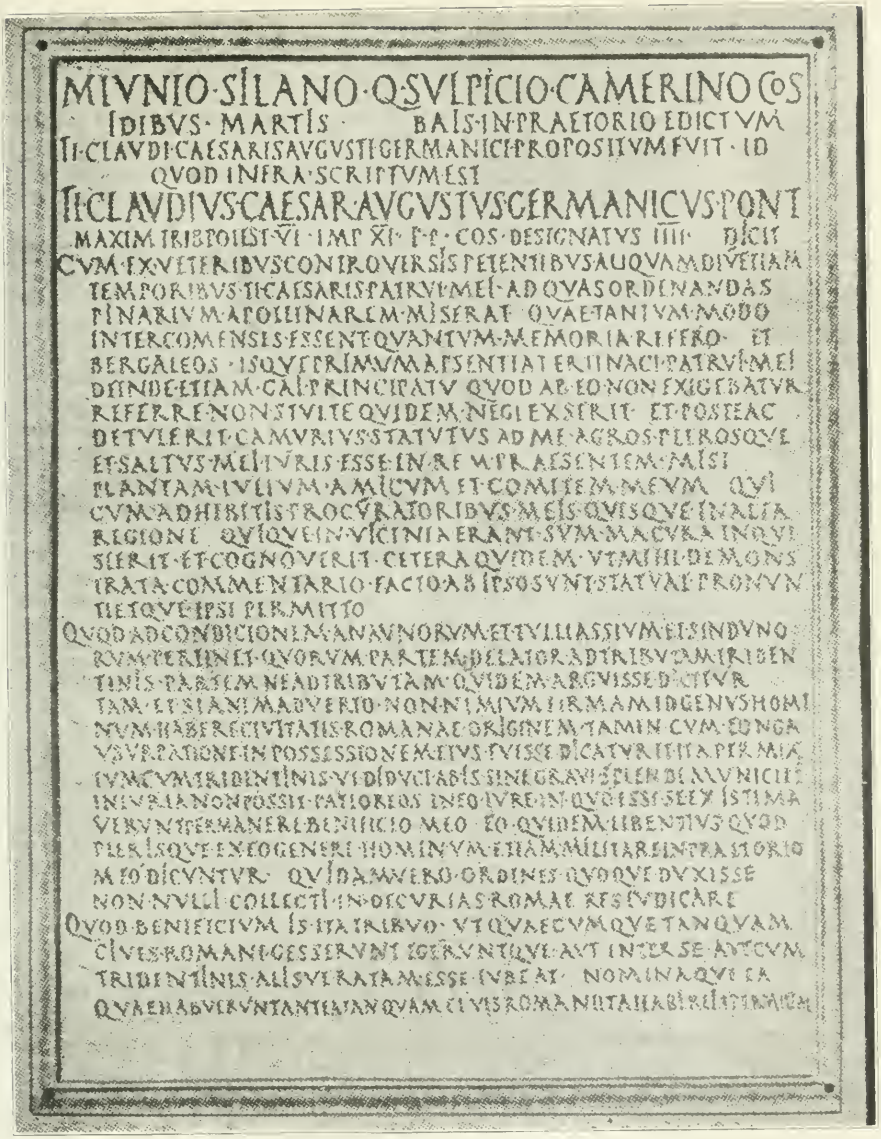
La scoperta d'un sì prezioso documento, che fu subito battezzato col nome di *Tavola Clesiana*, riempì di giubilo i Trentini, gl'Italiani tutti. E da ogni parte del mondo giunsero congratulazioni al governo d'Italia. Solo dall'Austria e dalla Germania giunsero parole d'incredulità e dispetto. Ma esse non potevano scuotere in verun modo il bronzeo contenuto della verità. Sì che gli autori di siffatte parole dovettero finire col riconoscere anch'essi l'autenticità della *Tavola Clesiana*; ma si vendicarono, insinuando che il luogo della scoperta era stato abitato sempre da popoli di razza teutonica, non mai da popoli di razza latina.

I Trentini continuarono i loro scavi. E trovarono ben presto un'immensa quantità di ossa e teschi umani, insieme con lance, spade, giavelletti, monete romane, ecc.

L'insigne storico e archeologo tedesco Teodoro Mommsen corse a Cles per investigare. Vi corsero anche molti altri professori tedeschi, allo scopo di vedere se, per mezzo dei nuovi oggetti rinvenuti, "si potevano distruggere le prove messe in luce dalla *Tavola Clesiana*".

Dopo attento e minuzioso esame, risultò chiarissimamente che le ossa e i teschi con le lance, le spade, i giavelletti, le monete, ecc. erano appartenuti senz'alcun dubbio a individui di pura razza latina e non teutonica.

Il Mommsen, che s'intendeva di cose romane antiche meglio di qualsiasi altro studioso del suo tempo, pubblicò il risultato delle sue accurate e autorevoli investigazioni in un apposito opuscolo, nel quale concluse che tutti i fatti pro-



MIVNIO·SILANO·Q·SVLPICIO·CAMERINO COS
IDIBVS·MARTIS BASI·IN·PRAETORIO EDICTVM
TI·CLAVDI·CAESARIS·AVGVSTI·GERMANICI·PROPOSITVM·FVIT·ID
QVOD INFRA·SCRIPTVM·EST
TI·CLAVDIVS·CAESAR·AVGVSTVS·GERMANICVS·PONT
MAXIM·TRIB·POTEST·VI·IMP·XI·P·P·COS·DESIGNATVS·IIII·DICIT
CVM·EX·VETERIBVS·CONTROVERSIS·PETENTIBVS·AVQVAM·DIVERSIA
TEMPORIBVS·TI·CAESARIS·PATRVI·MEI·AD·QVAS·ORDINANDAS
PINARIVM·APOLLINAREM·MISERAT·QVAESTIONVM·MODO
INTERCOMENSES·ESSENT·QVANTVM·MEMORIA·REFERO·ET
BERGALEOS·ISQVE·PRIMVM·AB·SENTIA·TERTIINACI·PATRVI·MEI
DEINDE·ETIAM·CAI·PRINCIPATV·QVOD·AB·EO·NON·EXIGEBATVR
REFERRE·NON·STVLTE·QVIDEM·NEGLEXERIT·ET·POSTEA·AC
DE·TVLERIT·CAMVRIVS·STATVTVS·AD·ME·AGROS·FLEBOSQVE
ET·SALTVS·MEI·IVRIS·ESSE·IN·RE·MIHI·PRAESENTE·FALSI
PLANTAM·IVLIVM·AMICVM·ET·COMITEM·MEVM·QVI
CVM·ADHIBITIS·PROCVRATORIBVS·MEIS·QVIS·QVE·IN·ALIA
REGIONE·QVISQVE·IN·VICINIA·ERANT·SVM·MACVRA·INQVI
SIERIT·ET·COGNOVERIT·CETERA·QVIDEM·VTI·MIHI·DEMONS
TRATA·COMMENTARIO·FACTO·AB·IPSOS·VNTS·TATVAE·PROMVN
TIETQVE·IPSI·PERMITTO
QVOD·AD·CONDICIONEM·ANAVNORVM·ET·TVLLIASSIVM·EIS·INDVNO
RVM·PERTINES·QVORVM·PARTEM·DELATOR·AD·TRIBVS·AMIRIBEN
TINIS·PARTEM·NEAD·TRIBVTAM·QVIDEM·ARGVISSE·DICITVR
TAM·ET·SI·ANIMADVERTO·NON·NIMIVM·FIRMAM·IDGENVS·HOMI
NVM·HABERE·CIVITATIS·ROMANAE·ORIGINEM·TAMEN·CVM·LONGA
VSVE·POSSESSIONE·IN·POSSESSIONEM·EIVS·IVSSE·DICATVR·ITA·PERMIX
TVM·CVM·IRIDENTINIS·VT·DIVTIAS·IS·SINE·GRAVI·ESPLENDI·MVNICIPI
IN·VRIAM·NON·POSSIT·PATIORES·IN·EO·IVRE·IN·QVO·ESSE·SEEX·ISTIMA
VERVNT·PERMANERE·BENEFICIO·MEO·EO·QVIDEM·LIBENTIVS·QVOD
PLERISQVE·EX·EO·GENERE·HOMINVM·ETIAM·MILITARE·IN·PRAETORIO
MEO·DICVNTVR·QVIDAM·VERO·ORDINES·QVOQVE·DVXISSE
NON·NVLLI·COLLECTI·IN·OTIOSVRIAS·ROMAE·RESTVDICARE
QVOD·BENEFICIVM·IS·ITA·TRIBVO·VT·QVAECVMQVE·TANQVAM
CIVES·ROMANI·POSSESSORVM·IGERVNTQVE·AVT·INTER·SE·AVT·CVM
TRIDENTINIS·ALIS·VERATA·MESSE·IVBEAT·NOMINAQVE·EA
QVAE·HABVERVNT·ANTEHAC·QVAM·CIVES·ROMANI·TABVLIS·RELATA·FIERI

LA "TAVOLA CLESIANA"

vavano pienamente e solennemente che la regione di Trento "è italiana e appartenne all'Italia".

Gl'insinuatori dovettero ingoiar la pillola e turarsi la bocca.

Dalmazia [1]. Una contesa tra i Dalmati e alcuni popoli (Lissani e Daorsi) alleati di Roma provocò per la prima volta l'intervento dei Romani negli affari della Dalmazia. Un forte esercito romano, comandato dal console Marcio Figulo, sbarcò nella detta regione l'anno 156 avanti Cristo, assediò la capitale ch'era allora Dalminio, l'espugnò e costrinse i Dalmati a una pace onerosa.

Ma assai più tardi Roma potè soggiogare definitivamente la Dalmazia, fiera quanto mai della propria libertà, e tramutarla, da terra barbarica e povera qual'era, in paese civile e ricco.

Sulle coste dalmate i porti come Zara, Salona presso Spálato, Ragusa e Antivari ricevettero un potentissimo impulso, e insieme con i porti di Fiume, Trieste, Pola, Aquileia, Ravenna, Rimini, Ancona, Bari, Brindisi e Durazzo, tutti importantissimi, fecero del mare Adriatico un gran lago romano fiorente di vita e di commerci.

La romanizzazione della Dalmazia fu tanto profonda e salda, che Diocleziano, allorquando, stanco di mente e di corpo per le gravi cure di Stato e gli acciacchi, abdicò all'Impero nel 305, non preferì altro luogo di riposo che Salona, dove si ritirò e visse, occupato nella poetica e deliziosa coltivazione dei suoi splendidi giardini, fino al 313.

E Giulio Nipote, quando nel 478 fu deposto da Oreste (il padre di Romolo Augusto), non seppe far di meglio che rifugiarsi nella Dalmazia, da dove Roma imperiale mandò l'ultimo guizzo di luce sul mondo.

Così il dominio di Roma, dapprima temuto e osteggiato, finì col diventare — grazie alla saggezza con cui fu esercitato — l'età dell'oro degl'Istriani, dei Triestini, dei Trentini, dei Dalmati, di tutti i popoli che oggi sono al confine orientale d'Italia.

[1] La regione litorale a est del mare Adriatico.

E il nome sacro dell'Urbe, generatore di luce a di calore al pari del Sole, sebbene macchiato dalle colpe dei tiranni, fu dai detti popoli amato, difeso, benedetto, inciso gloriosamente nelle pagine della loro storia.

II

Le invasioni barbariche in Italia. Attila, *flagellum Dei*, distrugge (anno 452) la bella città d'Aquileia fondata dai Romani fin dal 182-181 avanti Cristo. In un comizio presieduto dall'imperatore Carlo Magno, gl'Italiani dell'Istria protestano contro l'immigrazione slava (anno 804). La Republica dei dogi libera l'Adriatico dai corsari stranieri. Lo sposalizio di Venezia col mare. La spontanea sudditanza della Dalmazia (anno 999). Fedele per otto secoli. "L'onoratissima sepoltura" dello stendardo di San Marco.

Con la morte dell'imperatore romano Marco Aurelio, avvenuta a Vindobona (Vienna) l'anno 180, tramontò per sempre l'età dell'oro nelle regioni del confine orientale d'Italia. L'Impero romano caduto in balía di soldati accecati dalle più basse e sfrenate passioni, degenerò; perdette l'antico vigore, l'antico prestigio, l'antico splendore; rovinò. E allora i barbari (Goti, Vandali, Svevi, Borgognoni, Unni) — le teste ornate con corna di buoi, le spalle e i petti coperti con pelli d'animali feroci — che il possente *gladius* romano aveva tenuto per secoli in soggezione, si rovesciarono — assetati di vendetta, ávidi di preda e di dominio — dall'Alpi: e, facendo strage di campi, di città, di popoli, stremarono l'Italia; l'avvilirono; la ridussero a durissima servitù; la sprofondarono in quell'abisso tenebroso che fu poi chiamato *Medio Evo*.

La prima furia barbarica colpì naturalmente le regioni del confine orientale: il Trentino, il Friuli, l'Istria, la Dalmazia. Ma queste non si fecero ingoiare tanto facilmente; opposero, ai brutali invasori, una resistenza quanto mai tenace; difesero con supremo ardimento, con supremo

eroismo, la propria italianità, germe iniziale di quell'irredentismo che doveva, insieme con altre cause, determinare l'intervento dell'Italia (maggio 1915) nel più grande conflitto delle nazioni, e rinnovare così (circolo fatale delle alterne vicende umane!) le orrende tragedie che si svolsero, nel passato, tra gli stessi popoli e sulle stesse Alpi.

Basta ricordare Aquileia assediata dagli Unni. Essa lottò strenuamente contro i nemici, respingendoli più volte. Per punirla appunto dello straordinario valore dimostrato, Attila, *flagellum Dei*, dopo che con impetuosi e rabbiosi assalti riuscì a prenderla, vi trucidò i cittadini, compresi i vecchi, le donne, i fanciulli; la saccheggiò, l'incendiò; fece sparire dalla faccia della terra (anno 452), come sotto torrenti di lava, la metropoli piena di forza e di bellezza che i Romani avevano eretto con tanta sapienza, con tanto amore.

I superstiti d'Aquileia, nonchè quelli delle altre città di confine distrutte da Attila, si rifugiarono presso la isoletta del vicino estuario, e ivi fondarono a poco a poco la città che doveva, per virtù di governanti, diventare nei secoli successivi la regina dell'Adriatico: Venezia.[1]

E quando non poterono con l'armi, le regioni del confine orientale d'Italia sostennero la loro nazionalità con altri mezzi. L'anno 568 cominciarono a calare in Italia i Longobardi (gente germanica) comandati dal loro re Alboino. I nuovi barbari, al pari dei precedenti, non fecero che opera di distruzione e di morte.

Gl'Italiani del confine orientale, costretti ad abbandonare i loro paesi interni continuamente messi a ferro ed a fuoco dai selvaggi invasori, si ridussero al mare, il quale apriva loro, se non altro, una via di scampo. Ed ivi si dedicarono alla pesca e alla navigazione.

[1] Più tardi Aquileia risorse e ridiventò potente in grazia del suo patriarcato, uno dei maggiori principati teocratico-militari del Medio Evo. La sua Chiesa, dopo quella di Roma, fu la più illustre della Cristianità. E la Corte dei patriarchi d'Aquileia, i quali prestavano agl'imperatori che dominavano l'Italia un semplice omaggio feudale, fu delle più splendide e celebrate di quell'età. Il secolo XIII segnò l'apice della potenza patriarcale. Ma durante il 1420 Venezia, rimasta padrona del Friuli, soppresse quella potenza teocratico-feudale, e il vescovo veneziano ottenne egli stesso da Roma il titolo di patriarca d'Aquileia con giurisdizione su quella diocesi.

Ma l'imperatore Carlo Magno scacciò i Longobardi dall'Italia e, coll'intento, forse lodevole, di ripopolare le terre interne dell'Istria lasciate deserte dagl'Italiani, commise l'errore di chiamarvi alcune tribù slave che da tempo le appetivano.

Gl'Istriani non videro di buon occhio un tale atto. Lo credettoro nocivo alla loro compagine etnica e alla futura ricostituzione della loro unità politica. Epperò s'agitarono, protestarono altamente in un solenne comizio da loro tenuto presso il fiume Risano, sotto la presidenza dello stesso Carlo Magno (anno 804). Ed ebbero la virtù di far sì che il potentissimo imperatore dei Franchi si convincesse dell'errore commesso, sospendesse immediatamente la già avviata colonizzazione slava nell'Istria, e vi ravvivasse, invece, le più utili istituzioni romane, adattandole alle mutate condizioni dei tempi.

E quando videro che Venezia seguiva le virili tradizioni di Roma, meglio delle altre repubbliche italiche contemporanee, le regioni del confine orientale d'Italia, che non avevano mai tollerato volontariamente la mala signoria dei barbari, non esitarono a passare sotto la protezione del governo dei dogi. Basta ricordare la Dalmazia. I pirati narentani, slavi e croati infestavano da un pezzo l'Adriatico, assaltando, assassinando, rapinando. E non contenti di ciò, essi erano riusciti, col terrore, ad imporre gravi tributi agli abitatori delle coste dalmatiche e perfino agli stessi Veneziani.

I Dalmati implorarono l'aiuto della Repubblica, che altra volta li aveva anche difesi contro la prepotenza degli stranieri. Per fortuna era allora doge un uomo straordinariamente gagliardo risoluto magnanimo, "amalgama dinamico e vibrante di tutte le energie venete": Pietro II Orseolo, figlio di quel Pietro Orseolo, santificato poi dalla Chiesa cattolica, che aveva cominciato a proprie spese e portato a buon punto la costruzione della monumentale chiesa di San Marco.

L'Orseolo, ascoltati e confortati gli ambasciatori dalmati, disse ai Veneziani con accento fermo che, per cancellare

l'ignominia a cui la Repubblica era da tanto tempo soggetta, per ridonare la sicurezza ai fratelli continuamente taglieggiati dai corsari, bisognava fare la guerra.

I Veneziani, commossi, assentirono: e diedero ampia libertà d'azione al loro doge.

Il giorno dell'Ascensione dell'anno 999 una flotta formidabilmente armata salpava da Venezia al comando di Pietro II Orseolo.

I corsari, intanto, instavano più che mai per la riscossione del solito tributo.

Il doge fece risponder loro che sarebbe andato di persona a portarglielo.

Vi andò, infatti. Ma, invece del tributo pecuniario, egli portò ai nemici la ruggente forza dell'alato leone di San Marco.

Si combatterono grandi battaglie navali, specialmente a Curzola e a Lagosta. I corsari slavi del golfo di Narente opposero, più di tutti, una resistenza accanitissima. Ma a nulla valse. I loro navigli furono dai Veneziani incendiati. I corsari stessi furono parte uccisi, parte inseguiti nel continente e ricacciati e dispersi oltre i confini.

L'Adriatico fu così liberato dalle piraterie e dal terrore dei barbari.

I Veneziani accolsero in trionfo il doge vincitore, e gli conferirono il titolo di "Duca della Dalmazia". E a ricordanza dell'alta impresa compiuta, celebrarono lo sposalizio simbolico di Venezia col mare. Il doge, imbarcato con gli altri supremi magistrati della Repubblica sul dorato *Bucintoro* sfarzosamente ornato, gettò un anello benedetto nel mare e pronunziò queste significative parole: *Desponsamus te, mare nostro, in signum veri perpetuique dominii;* in segno del vero e perpetuo dominio che la Repubblica aveva ormai acquistato sul mare Adriatico, il quale fu, d'allora in poi, chiamato *Golfo di Venezia.*[1]

La Dalmazia, dal canto suo, esultante e riconoscente, ricompensò la sorella liberatrice facendole "spontaneo omaggio di sudditanza", giurandole ubbidienza e fedeltà

[1] La festa dello sposalizio di Venezia col mare si celebrò anche nei secoli successivi in ogni giorno dell'Ascensione.

"in eterno". Rimase ella infatti contenta e felice sotto il mite governo di Venezia, prima per quattro secoli interi, poi, dopo una breve involontaria interruzione, per altri 377 anni (in tutto otto secoli circa!). E vi sarebbe rimasta davvero "in eterno", se il trattato di Campoformio, stipulato il 16 ottobre 1795 tra Napoleone I e Francesco II imperatore d'Austria, non avesse traditorescamente colpita a morte anche la Repubblica dei dogi, sacrificandola alle oblique cupidige degli Asburgo.

Il dolore provato dai Dalmati per siffatto trattato non si può descrivere. A Zara, capitale della Dalmazia, le bandiere venete furono portate sull'altare maggiore della chiesa, "ed ivi, prima dagli ufficiali, poi dai soldati, quindi dal popolo, furono baciate e talmente asperse di lagrime, che restarono tutte inumidite".

E a Perasto lo stendardo della Repubblica di San Marco, come una reliquia sacra, fu dai cittadini posto sotto l'altar maggiore della chiesa, mentre il comandante delle milizie, rivolto allo stendardo stesso, diceva in dolce dialetto veneziano queste toccanti parole di devozione:

Per 377 anni la nostra fede, el nostro valor t'à sempre custodío per mar dove n' à chiamà i tò nemici. Per 377 anni le nostre sostanze, el nostro sangue, le nostre vite xe stade sempre per ti, e felicissimi s'avemo reputà. Ti con nu, nu con ti, semo stai sempre vittoriosi, sempre illustri. Za che non ne resta altro de far per ti, il nostro cor sia l'onoratissima to sepoltura, e el più grande, el più vero elogio le nostre lagrime! Per 377 anni la nostra fede e il nostro valore ti hanno sempre custodito per mare, dove ci hanno chiamato i tuoi nemici. Per 377 anni le nostre sostanze, il nostro sangue, le nostre vite sono state sempre per te, e felicissimi ci dobbiamo reputare. Tu con noi, noi con te, siamo stati sempre vittoriosi, sempre illustri. Giacchè non ci resta altro da fare per te, il nostro cuore sia l'onoratissima tua sepoltura, e il più grande, il più vero elogio sieno le nostre lagrime!

Anche le isole del Quarnero[1], conquistate dal doge Pietro

[1] Il golfo del Quarnero è quel largo braccio di mare Adriatico che s'insinua tra la costa orientale della penisola istriana e il litorale croato. Esso — dalla insenatura di Porto Re alle alture di Meia e di Tersato, fino a Fiume — è Italia e segna il confine geografico d'Italia. Le sue isole furono anche in potere dei Romani. Ai tempi di Giulio Cesare esse erano inscritte alla Liburnia che faceva parte dell'Illiria.

II Orseolo, rimasero sempre sotto il governo di Venezia (eccetto il periodo dal 1378 al 1409 in cui esse furono con la Dalmazia cedute transitoriamente all'Ungheria). Vi rimasero fino alla caduta della Repubblica, con la quale furono consegnate all'Austria in forza del suddetto trattato di Campoformio riconfermato dal Congresso di Vienna del 1815.

III

I Comuni. Federico Barbarossa imperatore di Germania scende in Italia l'anno 1154 e massacra, saccheggia, incendia; cattura il celebre riformatore Arnaldo da Brescia e lo consegna al papa Adriano IV, il quale l'arde vivo. La compiacente Dieta di Roncaglia. Milano, Crema e Piacenza si ribellano. Il Barbarossa si vendica mostruosamente: assedia Crema, e non potendo vincerla con l'armi, lega ad alcune torri mobili i fanciulli cremaschi e milanesi ch'egli tiene in ostaggio, e li espone ai colpi degli assediati. L'amor di patria può più dell'amore paterno sugl'Italiani. La distruzione di Crema e di Milano. La *Lega Veronese*. Un papa energico. La *Lega Lombarda*. L'arcivescovo Cristiano di Magonza, plenipotenziario del Barbarossa in Italia, assedia Ancona e riduce i difensori a cibarsi d'ortiche e cuoio. L'eroismo delle donne anconitane. L'unione dei Comuni italiani genera l'epopea. Il *Carroccio*. La *Compagnia della Morte*. Il Barbarossa è terribilmente sconfitto dagl'Italiani a Legnano (1176); è sconfitto anche per mare dalla flotta unita di Venezia e di Trieste; deve baciare il piede al suo più fiero nemico (papa Alessandro III); deve implorare la pace e abbandonare per sempre l'Italia senza averla potuta soggiogare.

E quando i Comuni d'Italia tentarono di ricostituire a unità e indipendenza la patria invasa e devastata ancóra una volta dai Teutoni, le regioni del confine orientale non si limitarono soltanto a manifestazioni di solidarietà puramente spirituale, ma si slanciarono con fede e ardore sul campo dell'azione, dove più sovrastava il pericolo, dando

il loro contributo di pensiero e di sangue alla causa nazionale. Basta ricordare Trieste.

È noto che sulle rovine del vecchio edificio feudale in Italia sorse il governo comunale autonomo, ossia il reggimento libero delle città, con una magistratura suprema di tre, sei o dodici cónsoli; con un consiglio minore di notabili, detto *di credenza*, che deliberava delle cose ordinarie; con un'assemblea generale di tutti i cittadini, la quale deliberava delle cose più importanti (votare leggi, stipulare trattati d'alleanza, dichiarare guerra, concludere pace, battere moneta).

Federico Barbarossa imperatore di Germania, deciso di ridurre l'Italia all'antica obbedienza teutonica, l'invase durante l'anno 1154 con un grosso esercito; devastò campi; incendiò villaggi e città, tra cui Chieri ed Asti; assediò Tortona e le ingiunse di rompere immediatamente l'alleanza ch'essa aveva con Milano. La nobile cittadetta respinse il disonorante comando. Il Barbarossa l'assaltò: e, dopo due mesi d'aspra lotta, l'espugnò, la saccheggiò, la distrusse. Compiute siffatte prodezze, se n'andò a Pavia, dove si fece incoronare re d'Italia; poi, invitato da Adriano IV, prese la via dell'Italia Meridionale, allo scopo d'estendere anche laggiù il suo dominio e, nello stesso tempo, catturare Arnaldo da Brescia — un terribile nemico della Chiesa cattolica di quei tempi — e consegnarlo al detto pontefice.

Era Arnaldo da Brescia un monaco dalla mente ispirata e severa, che vagheggiava il rinnovamento religioso e politico del genere umano, ponendo per base la verità e la morale in un senso positivo e sano. Non riconosceva il battesimo dei fanciulli, le preghiere dei defunti, il sacrifizio della messa. Predicando con ardente infrenabile foga contro il potere temporale dei papi e contro i corrotti costumi degli ecclesiastici, era riuscito ad acquistarsi il favore e l'amore del popolo; a scacciare, successivamente, i papi Lucio II ed Eugenio III; a fondare in Roma una repubblica laico-democratica con un senato. Però, dopo dieci anni di potere, Adriano IV — papa astuto, audace, senza scrupoli — l'attaccò; lo calunniò; lo scomunicò insieme con quelli che mag-

giormente lo sostenevano; riempì di tanto terrore la città di Roma, che il generoso novatore fu ripudiato, espulso, perseguitato.

Il Barbarossa lo trovò rifugiato in un castello della Campania; lo strappò a viva forza dalle mani di chi l'ospitava; lo trascinò in catene a Roma ai piedi d'Adriano IV. E costui, da buon vicario di Cristo, lo condannò al rogo; fece gittare le ceneri del martire nel Tevere; ricompensò il Barbarossa del servizio reso alla Chiesa, cingendogli con gran pompa la corona imperiale nel Vaticano.

Il popolo romano si sdegnò a tanta nequizia: e insorse: ed obbligò il Barbarossa a partire precipitosamente per la Germania.

Il tiranno si vendicò dell'umiliazione patita, mettendo a ferro e foco l'innocente città di Spoleto.

Ripiombò in Italia tre anni dopo, sempre assetato di sangue e di dominio; espugnò Brescia; poi, con un esercito di 100,000 fanti e 15,000 cavalieri, marciò su Milano per punirla d'avere riedificato Tortona; per punirla, sopratutto, dello spirito ribelle ch'essa troppo tenacemente dimostrava contro la signoria teutonica.

La metropoli lombarda sostenne leoninamente l'urto nemico, e resistè finchè ebbe viveri. Quando questi le mancarono, essa s'arrese, ma non a discrezione, sibbene a patti onorevoli (1158).

Il Barbarossa allora convocò a Roncaglia, nel Piacentino, una compiacente Dieta, dalla quale fece sentenziare che le città d'Italia rette a Comune dovevano, al pari di tutte le altre, dipendere amministrativamente e giudiziariamente da un rappresentante imperiale detto *Podestà*.

Milano, Crema, Piacenza fremettero; protestarono; dissero chiaro e tondo ch'esse non si sarebbero mai piegate a siffatta imposizione.

Il Barbarossa montò in bestia. Gli latrarono nella superba anima i più truci propositi di vendetta. Si scagliò, alla testa d'un poderoso esercito, contro Crema ch'era la più debole. Ma fu respinto. Allora ricorse a uno stratagemma terribile. Fece costruire alcune torri mobili di legno; nell'interno d'esse appostò i suoi più feroci soldati

armati fino ai denti; all'esterno legò molti fanciulli di Crema e di Milano ch'egli teneva in ostaggio. Così cariche, accostò le scellerate torri alle mura, sperando che gli assediati, per non uccidere i propri figli, si sarebbero astenuti da ogni ulteriore resistenza. Invece successe tutto il contrario. Gli assediati, massimamente i padri, continuarono a difendersi. E, tempestando a un tempo le loro adorate creature e l'odiato nemico, gridavano con fede di neofiti: "Fortunati coloro che muoiono per la patria!"

Ben sei mesi — dal luglio 1159 al gennaio 1160 — durò la tragica lotta. Alla fine — tagliati gli acquedotti, mancati i viveri, spento il fiore dei cittadini — Crema fu costretta a cedere. Il Tedesco la premiò dell'eroismo dimostrato, saccheggiandola e incendiandola.

Nonostante lo scempio di Crema, Milano persistè nella sua attitudine ribelle. Il Barbarossa, che già aveva ricevuto rinforzi dalla Germania, l'assaltò con ímpeto ferino. Ma non gli valse. L'assaltò più volte. Ma i suoi conati si fransero sempre come onde di mare in burrasca contro una costiera. Allora capì che soltanto con la fame avrebbe potuto vincere i Milanesi. Chiese altri rinforzi. Li ottenne. Assediò la città. Questa resistè due lunghissimi anni. Poi, stretta dal sempre crescente numero di nemici, esausta dalla mancanza di viveri, s'arrese (marzo 1162). Il Teutone la trattò ferocissimamente; la distrusse; la seminò di sale: segno ch'essa non poteva più risorgere! Indi se ne tornò in Germania per ricevervi e godere gli onori del trionfo.

L'atroce fine di Milano, però, commosse profondamente le altre città d'Italia; le impensierì; le convinse che, per la salvezza comune, bisognava urgentemente e saldamente unirsi.

Le prime ad allearsi tra loro, dopo avere scacciato dalle rispettive sedi le guarnigioni e i ministri imperiali, furono Verona, Vicenza, Padova e Treviso. *Lega Veronese.*

Il Barbarossa ripiombò com'un falco su Verona. Ma trovò duro: tanto duro, ch'egli stimò prudente rivolarsene immediatamente in Germania per rifornirsi d'altri uomini (1164).

Intanto nel 1159 era morto Adriano IV. Il Barbarossa

—trescando, corrompendo, minacciando, intimidendo—era riuscito a far eleggere dai suoi cardinali un antipapa a lui ligio (Vittore IV) e, morto costui, Pasquale III, animo vile e servo al pari dell'altro.

I cardinali indipendenti, invece, avevano votato per il Bandinelli di Siena (Alessandro III), uomo sagace ed energico, favorevole alla causa dei Comuni. Questo papa scomunicò da Anagni il Barbarossa; poi s'accinse a combatterlo a tutt'oltranza, unendosi — insieme con Venezia, Bergamo, Brescia, Mantova e Ferrara — alla *Lega Veronese*, la quale da quel momento fu chiamata *Lega Lombarda.*

I rappresentanti delle città alleate, nonchè i profughi milanesi, s'incontrarono il 7 aprile 1167 nel convento di Pontída situato tra Bergamo e Lecco. Ivi si strinsero le destre; si guardarono negli occhi; si lessero nei cuori; fusero le loro volontà in una sola volontà; giurarono di difendere, fraternamente compatti fino alla morte, la libertà della patria continuamente insidiata, conculcata, vilipesa dalla barbarica prepotenza straniera.

Al memorabile convegno parteciparono anche—con la stessa fede, con lo stesso ardore degli altri—i rappresentanti di Trieste. E, in progresso di tempo, vi aderirono Piacenza, Parma, Modena, Bologna Reggio, Novara, Vercelli, Como, Asti, Tortona, Ravenna, Rimini, Imola, Forlì.

La *Lega Lombarda* si mise subito al lavoro: riedificò Milano, contro il divieto del Barbarossa; poi, in contrapposizione di Pavia e del marchese di Monferrato rimasti partigiani del tiranno, fondarono tra il Tanaro e la Bormida una città, alla quale posero il nome d'Alessandria, in onore d'Alessandro III che aveva promosso e sosteneva e dirigeva sapientemente e gagliardamente la *Lega.*

In questo mentre, l'arcivescovo Cristiano di Magonza, "legato plenipotenziario" del Barbarossa in Italia, cercò di sottomettere Ancona che s'era ribellata al giogo teutonico. La nobile città dell'Adriatico fu assediata per mare e per terra; fu attaccata e bersagliata giorno e notte; ma si difese con sublime eroismo, anche quando i suoi figli furono ridotti dalla crudeltà nemica a cibarsi di ortiche bollite e cuoio ammollito nell'aceto.

Qualche episodio.

Una giovane madre, col bambino al petto, visto presso le mura un guerriero disteso a terra boccheggiante per fame, s'accostò e gli disse: "Non mangio da più giorni; non ho più latte nemmeno per il mio piccino; ma se una goccia ancóra ne resta nel mio seno, prendila, è tua!" — Le soavissime parole ebbero un prodigioso effetto. Il guerriero si rianimò, si rizzò, sorrise alla generosa donna, corse dove più ferveva la mischia, affrontò beato la morte.

Un violentissimo attacco minacciava di subissare la città. I difensori si battevano col consueto valore, ma non s'illudevano sul funesto pericolo che sovrastava la loro patria. Allora una donna di nome Stamura, afferrato un tizzone ardente, si slanciò in mezzo a un nembo di strali contro le macchine nemiche, e le incendiò.

Sopraggiunse un soccorso di Lombardi e Romagnoli. I Tedeschi dovettero fuggire. Ancona ebbe salva la propria libertà. (1174).

Il Barbarossa, infastidito dalla piega che prendevano a suo danno le cose, si mise alla testa d'un altro colossale esercito, e ridiscese in Italia per i valichi del Moncenisio, deciso a farla finita una buona volta con le velleità libertarie e unitarie degl'Italiani.

In primo luogo egli arse Susa, poi soggiogò Torino ed Asti; poi marciò contro Alessandria. Questa città, pur non avendo che primitive fortificazioni composte di terra e paglia, tenne testa agli assalti nemici per ben quattro mesi. Alla fine gli assediati seppero che i soccorsi dei collegati stavano per arrivare. Pieni d'esultanza, essi fecero di notte, al buio, un'improvvisa sortita: piombarono sui nemici: ne accopparono un gran numero: costrinsero gli altri a ritirarsi disordinatamente (1175).

Il Barbarossa s'impressionò. Capì che l'impresa alla quale s'era accinto presentava gravi difficoltà. Tentò patteggiare con la *Lega*. Ma riuscirono infruttuose le sue trattative. Allora aspettò che gli giungessero dalla Germania nuovi rinforzi. E, quando li ebbe, mosse risoluto contro Milano.

I collegati non gli fecero compíre il viaggio. Andarono ad incontrarlo lungo la via, seguíti dal *Carroccio*.[1]

Era questo, secondo la descrizione lasciataci da Lodovico Antonio Muratori nei suoi *Annali d'Italia*, un gran carro a quattro ruote, assai più alto dell'ordinario, con una piattaforma assai più vasta di quella dei carri comuni, dipinto tutto in colore vermiglio fiammante. Nel mezzo sorgeva un altare ricoperto d'un ricchissimo tappeto rosso di dimensioni tali, che ricadeva dalla piattaforma sui lati, fino a toccare le ruote. Nel mezzo dell'altare s'inalzava un'antenna dello stesso color rosso, dalla quale sventolava, mantenutovi da corde dorate e di gran costo, il gonfalone di Milano con la croce rossa in campo bianco. A metà dell'antenna pendeva un immenso crocifisso e una campana per dare gli ordini.

Il carro era tirato da quattro paia di buoi d'imponente statura, tutti di dimensioni e di colore uguali, coperti di ricchissime gualdrappe, rosse per i buoi di destra, bianche per i buoi di sinistra. Esso era la sede mobile del comando generale. All'intorno doveva rimanere compatta la fanteria contro la cavalleria nemica.

Caduto il *Carroccio*, eran perduti la guerra e l'onore. I Milanesi avevano perciò formato, a estrema difesa di questo loro sacro propugnacolo, due compagnie di giovani, scelti tra i più vigorosi e virtuosi cittadini (una di 300, l'altra di 900), armati d'usbergo, azza e pugnale. Quella dei 900 — comandata da Alberto da Giussano indossante la corazza e portante la spada con cintura di cuoio dorato offertagli dal popolo, giusta la tradizione — si chiamava la *Compagnia della Morte*, per avere i guerrieri che la componevano, all'atto della partenza, giurato di vincere o morire.

Anche i 300 avevano giurato di difendere il *Carroccio* e lasciarsi uccidere tutti, piuttosto che abbandonarlo.

Il giorno di sabato 29 maggio 1176 l'esercito del Barbarossa e quello della *Lega Lombarda* si trovarono faccia a faccia presso il castello di Legnano, tra l'Olona e il Ticino, a circa venti miglia da Milano. Al primo scontro, la caval-

[1] Ariberto da Intimiano vescovo di Milano e supremo magistrato del Comune nel 1038 ideò e costruì per la prima volta il *Carroccio*.

leria milanese fu respinta; la cavalleria tedesca galoppò verso il *Carroccio*. I difensori di questo si gettarono in ginocchio; invocarono Dio e sant'Ambrogio (il patrono di Milano); si rialzarono di slancio; si piantarono saldamente come giganti; sostennero formidabilmente l'urto nemico; picchiaron sodo; spaccaron teste di cavalli e di cavalieri. Ma il loro eroismo stava per essere sopraffatto dal numero enorme dei nemici. Il *Carroccio* — simbolo di patria, di libertà, di gloria — correva serio pericolo.

Allora la *Compagnia della Morte*, ripetendo ad alta voce il giuramento di vincere o morire, s'avventò con ímpeto ruggente travolgente tremendo nel più folto della mischia: e macellò tutti i Tedeschi che incontrò; atterrò lo stendardo imperiale; sgominò l'intero esercito nemico.

La sopraggiunta cavalleria della *Lega* diede il colpo di grazia, inseguendo con le spade alle reni i vinti per ben otto miglia.

Il Barbarossa, che aveva pugnato personalmente tra le prime file, rimase sepolto insieme col suo cavallo sotto un monte di cadaveri.[1] Fu creduto morto. Ma due giorni dopo, egli comparve a Pavia, solo, senz'elmo, senza spada, tutto lordo di polvere, accigliato, silenzioso.

La battaglia di Legnano fu la più potente, la più bella affermazione d'italianità e di concordia fatta dagl'Italiani nel Medio Evo.

La città di Trieste, fedele al giuramento profferito dai suoi rappresentanti a Pontída, non solo vi contribuì degnamente col valore dei suoi figli, ma fece di più. S'unì a Venezia per battere anche per mare il nemico. Il giorno dell'Ascensione del 1177, infatti, la flotta associata, composta di 50 legni tra galee veneziane e triestine, comandata dal doge Sebastiano Ziani, affrontò presso Salvore (un promontorio a poca distanza da Trieste) la flotta imperiale forte di 75 galee: e, dopo aspra battaglia, la sconfisse, riuscendo a catturare perfino la nave ammiraglia, sulla quale si trovava lo stesso figlio del Barbarossa: Ottone.

Il tiranno tedesco dovè affrettarsi a baciare il piede ad Alessandro III.

[1] Alcuni storici dicono ch'egli sia fuggito codardamente.

Soltanto allora egli potè ottenere dalla *Lega* una tregua di sei anni, firmata a Venezia durante il 1177.

Tentò piu tardi (il lupo perde il pelo, non mai il vizio) con ogni arte, con ogni sforzo, di rifarsi dell'umiliazione patita; ma non vi riuscì. Per esempio: con un editto del 1182, egli ingiunse alla città di Trento, che si reggeva a Comune, di non eleggere più i suoi magistrati-consoli, di cessare da ogni atto di sovranità, di sottostare a un vicario imperiale. Ma Trento non obbedì e continuò a reggersi con la propria indipendenza.

Perduta ogni speranza di soggiogare l'Italia, il Barbarossa, appena spirata la tregua accordatagli, si rassegnò a concludere con gl'Italiani una pace definitiva, firmata a Costanza, città della Germania, l'anno 1183.

IV

I Triestini per l'indipendenza municipale della loro città e per il mantenimento della loro italianità (dalla pace di Costanza del 1183 in poi). Contro i vescovi-baroni (1295–1349). Contro Venezia (1368–1381). La " dedizione " all'Austria (1382). Il partito anti-austriaco, le sue ribellioni, il suo martirologio. " L'orgoglio della discendenza romana " (dal Quattrocento al Settecento).

E nelle vicende che succedettero alle guerre contro il Barbarossa, le regioni del confine orientale d'Italia non tralasciarono mai di lottare per la loro indipendenza e per la loro italianità. Basta ricordare ancóra Trieste, che fu ed è la città raccogliente in sè, meglio d'ogni altra città italiana irredenta, quasi tutte le tradizioni storiche, quasi tutte le idealità politiche delle dette regioni.

Trieste, quando entrò nella *Lega Lombarda*, era governata da un vescovo-barone dipendente dal patriarcato d'Aquileia. Ma col trattato di Costanza del 1183, essa ottenne, come le altre città della *Lega Lombarda*, l'autonomia della propria amministrazione, il diritto d'eleggere i propri

magistrati, nonchè quello di stringere alleanze, dichiarare guerra e trattare pace.

Con tutto ciò, non prima del 1295 Trieste potè acquistare una vera e propria indipendenza municipale. Ed ecco come. Il vescovo-barone Brisa aveva urgente bisogno di denaro per pagare i debiti nei quali era affogato. I Triestini, ch'erano ricchi, ne profittarono. E offrirono al vescovo-barone indebitato i mezzi di levarlo d'impiccio.

L'offerta fu accettata. Si chiamarono i notari e si rogò un atto col quale il vescovo-barone Brisa rinunziava "per sè e per tutti i suoi successori" ai diritti di signoria su Trieste.

Da quel momento il potere sovrano della città passò realmente nelle mani dei cittadini. Fu eletto il primo podestà — il capo del "libero Stato di Trieste" — Enrico della Torre appartenente alla famiglia Torriani di Milano stabilitasi da lungo tempo nell'Istria.

Il della Torre promulgò subito gli statuti a somiglianza degli altri Comuni d'Italia; cinse la città di solide mura per premunirla dalle insidie di fuori; sistemò gli affari interni; diede incoraggiamento a ogni buona iniziativa, per cui sorsero molti edifizi, società letterarie, collegiate d'arti e mestieri. E s'irrobustirono sempre più le virtù civiche.

Un sì rapido sviluppo morale e materiale doveva naturalmente destare le invidie e le cupidige dei nemici.

Nel 1313 un Marco Ranfo, già vassallo vescovile, ordì una congiura per rovesciare il potere popolare e ristabilire quello baronale dei vescovi. I Triestini se n'accorsero in tempo e, al suono dell'*arrengo*, assaltarono la casa del Ranfo, la rasero al suolo, giustiziarono il traditore e i suoi complici.

Nel 1349 il vescovo Antonio Negri, uomo violento e attaccabrighe quanto mai, asservito a Carlo IV, riaccese la questione, reclamando il dominio baronale della città. I Triestini gli risposero armandosi. Il vescovo li scomunicò. I Triestini decretarono una specie di boicottaggio contro il vescovo e contro il capitolo della cattedrale; poi ricorsero agli árbitri. E questi diedero ragione al Comune.

Nell'estate del 1368 una galea veneta ancorata nel pôrto

di Trieste catturava un legno mercantile triestino, il quale s'era rifiutato di pagare la tassa di libero transito nell'Adriatico "ch'era mare di proprietà della Repubblica di San Marco". I Triestini assaltarono la galea e massacrarono il capitano e l'equipaggio.

Venezia mandò subito una flotta e un esercito per vendicare l'offesa. Dopo un "faticoso assedio", Trieste dovè arrendersi. Ma insorse l'anno dopo. Nuovo assedio da parte dei Veneziani.

I Triestini, non sapendo a qual santo votarsi per salvare l'indipendenza della loro città, invocarono l'aiuto di Leopoldo III duca d'Austria. Costui accorse con un esercito di 12,000 uomini. Ma fu sonoramente battuto dai Veneziani. E quando, con forze superiori, egli s'accingeva alla rivincita, i Veneziani lo calmarono, dandogli 75,000 zecchini d'oro (un milione di lire circa) "per il disturbo del viaggio e per le legnate prese".

Trieste fu abbandonata al suo destino.

Essa tentò — cinque anni più tardi con l'aiuto dei Genovesi, nel 1379 con l'aiuto del Comune d'Udine, nel 1380 un'altra volta con l'aiuto dei Genovesi — di sottrarsi al dominio della *Serenissima.* Ma non vi riuscì.

Finalmente tra le due sorelle belligeranti s'intromise come paciere Amedeo VI duca di Savoia, detto il *Conte Verde.* Costui, con un lodo emanato il 24 agosto 1381, decise che, per evitare ulteriori contese, "Venezia doveva rinunziare a ogni pretesa sulla città di Trieste e sue dipendenze". Venezia rinunziò.

Ma tale soluzione, per quanto favorevole, non tranquillizzò i Triestini. Essi credettero necessario premunirsi contro i pericoli futuri, assicurandosi la protezione d'un potentato che fosse in grado di difenderli validamente in ogni evenienza, cioè contro chiunque avesse osato di riattentare alla loro indipendenza municipale. E non avevano torto, se si consideri che Trieste, in quel secolo, non era stata lasciata un sol momento in pace. Si rivolsero alle Repubbliche italiane. Ma non ottennero che rifiuti. Allora si videro costretti a rivolgersi agli stranieri. Altri Comuni d'Italia non avevano fatto lo stesso? Si guardarono intorno.

La scelta non poteva che cadere sopra un vicino. A settentrione del territorio di Trieste confinava il territorio dei duchi d'Austria. A costoro, specialmente, poteva premere l'amicizia di Trieste, dal cui porto essi potevano facilmente avviare correnti prosperose di commercio nell'interno dei loro paesi. Questa considerazione, più che altro, spinse i Triestini a fare il memorabile passo che poi i nemici dell'unità italiana chiamarono "la dedizione all'Austria".

Nel 1382 i Triestini mandarono ambasciatori a Gratz, per offrire "in protezione e tutela" il Comune al duca Leopoldo. Costui non si fece pregare. Accettò. Ma dovè giurare "per sè e per i suoi eredi" di rispettare il governo municipale di Trieste e tutti i diritti di signoria acquisiti dal popolo, principalmente quello di dichiarare guerra e concludere pace; di non annettere la città agli Stati ducali "e di non darla in feudo, nè venderla ad alcuno".

Una "dedizione" molto limitata, come si vede. Lo dimostrarono, più tardi, le condanne che i magistrati del Comune inflissero ai cittadini i quali, contro le sentenze dei giudici municipali, s'appellarono all'autorità imperiale", ed ai cittadini i quali congiurarono in favore dell'imperatore.[1] Lo dimostrò, sopratutto, il partito anti-austriaco sorto in Trieste dopo che il governo della città cadde, per intrighi e violenze, nelle mani dei sostenitori del duca: partito che non mancò d'avere il suo martirologio. Nel 1424, infatti, furono impiccati Donato Scorpion e Nicolò Urigio, mentre altri Triestini, tra i quali Giulio Orefice, furono condannati al carcere, perchè trovati rei d'avere agitato il popolo contro la signoria austriaca. E nel 1443 il triestino Giulio Cancellieri, capo d'un' altra sollevazione contro l'Austria, fu prima trascinato a coda di cavallo per le vie della città e poi impiccato alla presenza dei suoi congiunti.

Ma tante persecuzioni e coercizioni cruente non fecero che ingrossare sempre più il partito anti-austriaco a Trieste. Tanto vero ch'esso, nel 1467, capitanato dal tribuno popo-

[1] Lo dimostrò perfino il libro primo dello Statuto riformato nel 1550 da Ferdinando I (fratello di Carlo V) re dei Romani, dove la città di Trieste fu ufficialmente chiamata *Repubblica.*

lare Antonio Bonomo, riuscì a riconquistare l'amministrazione comunale, a scacciare dalla città i partigiani degli stranieri e ristabilirvi la libertà.

L'imperatore Federico III duca d'Austria non soffrì un siffatto colpo. Egli mandò immediatamente un suo commissario — Nicolò Lusgar (qualche storico dice Luogar) capitano croato del Vipacco — alla testa di mille mercenari tedeschi, per rimettere le cose a posto.

Il Lusgar e i suoi armigeri penetrarono di nottetempo in Trieste, assaltarono e saccheggiarono le case, fecero prigionieri i migliori cittadini e li rinchiusero nel castello di Duino. Poi, con ogni sorta di violenze, riuscirono a strappar loro una lettera diretta all'imperatore, "con la quale alcuni Triestini dichiaravano di voler rinunziare ai diritti garantiti alla città dal patto di dedizione".

Ma il 15 agosto 1468 s'udì improvvisamente suonare la campana dell'*arrengo*. Era un segnale convenuto. Il popolo, infiammato e capitanato ancóra una volta dal suo tribuno Antonio Bonomo, insorse; mise in fuga il commissario e i mercenari ch'erano con lui; impiccò 15 magistrati austriacanti ai merli del palazzo municipale; diè alle fiamme le case dei patrizi imperialisti; riproclamò solennemente l'indipendenza di Trieste.

L'imperatore montò su tutte le furie; digrignò i denti; strinse i pugni; affidò allo stesso Lusgar un nuovo esercito, con ordine di punire senza pietà nè misericordia la città ribelle.

Il Bonomo e il popolo si difesero disperatamente. Ma, alla fine, i soldatacci tedeschi, bene addestrati alle armi, ebbero il sopravvento: irruppero nella città; la saccheggiarono per tre giorni continui; poi l'incendiarono. Molti cittadini, tra i quali lo stesso Bonomo, riuscirono a fuggire parte nell'Istria, parte a Venezia. E quelli che non poterono fuggire, furono presi, incatenati, tormentati, impiccati.

Così l'ordine imperiale fu eseguito appuntino; tanto appuntino, che la cronaca registrò quell'anno, cioè il 1468, "come l'anno della distruzione di Trieste".

Pur nondimeno Sua Maestà, quando più tardi (1470) si benignò di visitare in forma ufficiale la città da lui sotto-

messa con la forza bruta, credè prudente di esiliare altri 300 cittadini e incamerarne i beni.

Il partito anti-austriaco a Trieste fu in tal modo ridotto ai minimi termini; fu quasi interamente distrutto. Ma risorse a grado a grado. E furono frequenti le risse "tra i cittadini e i *milites theutonici*". E alle ordinarie pene corporali si dovettero aggiungere pene pecuniarie per coloro che "sparlavano contro la signoria austriaca".

E quando, dal 1485 in poi, Federico III tentò più volte d'annettere Trieste all'impero, i Triestini s'opposero sempre recisamente, "ricordando che la loro città era italiana".

E nel 1508 in un pubblico comizio, mentre un vecchio arringava i cittadini sostenendo che sarebbe stato molto meglio per Trieste di passare sotto la dominazione di Venezia, la folla gettò le bandiere imperiali "nel fango del fossato delle mura".

E anche dopo che Carlo V assegnò nel 1522 la città a suo fratello Ferdinando, i Triestini non dimenticarono mai di sentirsi e riaffermarsi italiani. Per esempio: la cancelleria imperiale durante il 1523 inviò al Comune di Trieste un atto scritto in lingua tedesca. Il Comune lo respinse, rispondendo con fiera semplicità: *Cum latini simus linguam ignoramus theutonicam.* E avendo nel 1524 la cancelleria imperiale "rinnovato l'offesa", il Comune di Trieste, respingendo un'altra volta l'atto, replicò con meravigliosa dignità italica: *Quia civitas tergestina est in finibus et limitibus Italiae, omnes civis et ibidem oriundi habent proprium sermonem et idioma italicum.*

Fatti superbi ma ultimi della vigorosa anima comunale. Trieste cadde dalla sua nobiltà, insieme con gli altri Comuni d'Italia.

Solo due cose i Triestini custodirono con tenace gelosia: le tradizioni della loro origine romana e la loro autonomia comunale. Da ogni imperatore, essi pretesero sempre la conferma giurata dei loro antichi privilegi. Nel 1564 si rifiutarono di riformare gli statuti municipali, come voleva imporre l'arciduca Carlo. Nel 1660 salutarono come ospite, non come signore, l'imperatore Leopoldo I andato a Trieste, e designarono la comunità romanamente: *Senatus Popu-*

lusque Tergestinus. L'Ughelli, il quale visitò Trieste nel XVII secolo, rilevò che i Triestini "si compiacevano di vantarsi progenie dei Romani". E lo storico Scussa, se ricorda che il Comune di Trieste aveva deciso di tenere la cronaca degli avvenimenti: se ricorda che al capitano della città si dava per segno del comando una mazza: se ricorda che in certe gare si davano alcune balestre in premio ai vincitori, dice sempre che si faceva tutto ciò "a uso dei Romani, imitatori dei quali, come di loro sangue discendenti, si ritenevano i Triestini". Nel 1688 il Comune raccolse nella piazza grande le antichità romane minori, "perchè testimoniassero con onore dell'origine della città". Nel 1694 lo stesso Comune decretò la stampa di quella *Storia di Trieste* di Ireneo della Croce, che è una continua e vibrante esaltazione della romanità di Trieste. E non poche aristocratiche famiglie triestine del suddetto periodo di tempo usarono mettere nei loro stemmi la frase *de stirpe quirita*, per magnificare con essa la loro presunta origine romana. Financo nel 1727, ossia dieci anni dopo che Carlo VI imperatore d'Austria, approfittando del decadimento di Venezia, aveva dichiarato Trieste "porto franco", financo allora i patrizi triestini, mandando un atto al governo imperiale, si vantarono d'essere discendenti *plurimis ex equestri patricio ac consulari ordine familiis ad has extremas oras ex Urbe emigratis.*

Dichiarata porto franco nel 1717, collegata al suo naturale retroterra con vie commerciali, ravviata alla fortuna dei grandi traffici, Trieste non tardò a diventare un centro d'immigrazione intensa. Vi affluirono migliaia d'Italiani, specialmente dall'Italia del nord. Vi affluirono contemporaneamente migliaia di Tedeschi, Illirici, Greci, Ebrei abbastanza intriganti e impertinenti, tanto da arrogarsi ben presto il diritto — spinti e protetti in ciò dal governo austriaco — di combattere l'italianità della città ospitale non solo nello spirito e nella fisonomia, ma anche nel nome.

Il Comune di Trieste resistè prodigiosamente. Costretto, per esempio, dopo lunga opposizione, ad accettare la nomina

sovrana d'uno dei suoi giudici, esso protestò scrivendo malinconicamente all'imperatore: "Resterà solo alla città il deplorare per sempre le sue disgrazie a causa della derogazione delle sue leggi".

Così la fine del Settecento trovò Trieste ingombra di stranieri, immersa negli affari, nuotante in un'opulenza borghese priva affatto di fierezza politica, è vero; ma la trovò benanco e sopratutto italiana. Italiani il municipio, le scuole, le accademie, i teatri, i *clubs*. Italiani i più eminenti cittadini, dei quali basta ricordare, nel campo del pensiero, Gian Rinaldo Carli nativo di Capodistria ma triestino d'adozione, autore della celebre lettera *Sulla Patria degl'Italiani* che, sol cuo appello "diveniamo finalmente italiani per non cessare d'essere uomini", espresse per la prima volta il concetto concreto dell'unità nazionale; e, nel campo dell'azione, la famiglia Piatti immolatasi nel 1779 a Napoli per la gloria di quella Repubblica Partenopea, la quale fu uno dei fulgidi episodi iniziali del Risorgimento Italiano. Pietro, il padre della famiglia Piatti, e il figlio Antonio morirono da forti sul patibolo; la madre Andreana Prosdocimi e la figlia Elisabetta furono gettate nel carcere di Santa Maria Apparente; il figlio Giuseppe, graziato perchè adolescente, fu rinchiuso nel carcere di Favignana; il figlio Pietro, riuscito a fuggire, morì di crepacuore in esilio dopo pochi giorni. Primi martiri, primi e sacri testimoni della nuova anima italiana di Trieste!

V

Le lotte dell'italianità sostenute con intensa perseveranza dai Triestini, dagl'Istriani, dai Dalmati e dai Trentini contro l'Austria, dal trattato di Vienna del 1815 fino alle rivoluzioni italiane del 1848.

Dopo il trattato di Vienna del 1815, le regioni del confine orientale d'Italia, nonostante il dominio politico dell'Austria e gli sforzi fatti dal governo austriaco per deturpare il carattere italiano dei cittadini, si mantennero sempre

italiane e diedero con filiale amore uno splendido contributo di pensiero, di denaro e di sangue alle lotte del patrio risorgimento.

A Trieste, per esempio, trovarono rifugio non pochi liberali napoletani del 1821.

Dopo il 1821, *Vendite carboniche* (comitati della *Carboneria*) s'agitarono a Trieste e nell'Istria e con tanto fervore, da far proseliti perfino nel clero. Un decreto del governo austriaco del 20 agosto 1823 dava appunto al clero la colpa "delle trasgressioni politiche delle popolazioni istriane".

Nel 1829 il triestino Domenico Rossetti — poeta, storico, archeologo, anima fiera di patrizio d'antico Comune italico —fondava a Trieste il giornale italiano intitolato *L'Archeografo Triestino*, e con esso rinfacciava all'impero austriaco la inosservanza dei patti, gli contrastava l'azione snaturatrice dell'italianità, alimentava la protesta dei Triestini contro le illegalità e gli abusi governativi. E Pietro Kandler esumava la nobiltà romana di Trieste, la magnificenza romana di Pola, la sopravvissuta impronta romana di Parenzo, la potenza romana della X *Regio Italica*, il vallo romano dell'estremo confine orientale d'Italia dal passo di Postumia a Fiume, e, con la severa eloquenza della storia, riaffermava in faccia allo straniero la profonda italianità della terra posta tra le Alpi Giulie e il mare.

A Trieste nel 1833 fu arrestato il capitano di mare Giuseppe Sgarzolo, "sotto l'accusa d'avere accolto, a bordo del suo bastimento *Spartano*, segrete riunioni di cospiratori italiani e di avere tramato contro la vita di Metternich".

A Trieste, tra il 1834 e il 1836, fu fondata da un gruppo di capitalisti in gran parte italiani la compagnia del *Lloyd austro-ungarico*.[1]

Intorno allo stesso tempo fu fondato, anche a Trieste, dal dottor A Madonizza di Capodistria e da Giovanni

[1] Il primo piroscafo di questa Compagnia salpò il 16 maggio 1837 per Costantinopoli.

Da quel giorno, la storia del *Lloyd austro-ungarico* non segnò che una sequela di crescenti successi. I suoi vapori batterono tutti i mari del mondo: dal Mediterraneo al Pacifico, dal mar Rosso all'Atlantico.

Il *Lloyd austro-ungarico* rimase sempre un'istituzione italiana. Italiani i nomi dei suoi cento piroscafi, italiano il suo Consiglio d'Amministrazione, italiani i suoi impiegati, italiani i suoi marinari, italiani gli operai del suo splendido arsenale.

Orlandini libraio triestino, un altro giornale intitolato *La Favilla* col motto "Poca favilla gran fiamma seconda" (il primo numero di questo giornale uscì il 31 luglio 1836) che diventò ben presto un centro animatore d'italianità.[1]

Centinaia di Triestini nel 1843 si recarono a Venezia per assistere all'inaugurazione della ferrovia: e i congressi, anche quelli scientifici, ai quali essi parteciparono, si trasformarono in entusiastiche manifestazioni d'italianità.

A Trieste nel 1843 si rappresentarono il *Nabucco* e i *Lombardi*, e nel 1844 l'*Ernani* (tre opere verdiane di profondo significato patriottico), provocando frenetiche dimostrazioni d'italianità.

Nel 1844 la propaganda della *Giovine Italia* a Trieste e nell'Istria era quanto mai attiva. La polizia austriaca dovè andare in traccia di quattro ardenti emissari della detta società: G. Berardi, F. Orioli, R. Carbonis, G. Grozet, accusati di "girovagare sotto differenti pretesti di commercio e di letteratura".

Nello stesso anno 1844 i fratelli Attilio ed Emilio Bandiera disertarono dalla marina austriaca, della quale erano ufficiali, e andarono in Calabria per suggerimento di Mazzini ch'essi adoravano, allo scopo di sollevare quelle popolazioni in favore della causa nazionale. Ma furono traditi, quindi presi e fucilati dai soldati borbonici a Cosenza. Trieste offrì anch'essa un martire in quella patriottica occasione: Giulio Canal, il quale, arrestato dagli Austriaci come complice del nobile tentativo, morì nel 1845 in carcere a causa dei tormenti fisici e morali inflittigli.

Nel 1846 si rappresentò a Trieste un'altra opera verdiana di chiaro significato patriottico — l'*Attila* — provocando nuove frenetiche dimostrazioni d'italianità.

Trieste — appena seppe che Ferdinando II di Borbone il 10 febbraio 1848 aveva promulgato la Costituzione nel Regno delle Due Sicilie, Costituzione seguíta da quelle

[1] Furono collaboratori de *La Favilla*: prima i poeti Francesco Dall'Ongaro sacerdote di Mansuè (Oderzo), Antonio Gazzoletti da Nago presso Riva di Trento e Antonio Summa (il noto librettista di Verdi) della Carnia; poi il pubblicista Pacifico Valussi e il pittore Giovanni Kandler; infine la novelliera friulana Caterina Percoto e Graziadio Ascoli da Gorizia.

L'Ascoli diventò glottologo, fonologo, filologo di fama mondiale ed anche senatore del Regno d'Italia (1829–1907).

del Granduca di Toscana, di Carlo Alberto e di Pio IX e dai moti rivoluzionari di Vienna — s'abbandonò a straordinarie dimostrazioni d'italianità. La folla, capitanata da Leone Fortis giornalista e drammaturgo triestino e da Federico Seismit-Doda dalmata[1], percorse giubilante le vie della città, inneggiando alla libertà, bruciando l'effige del principe Metternich ministro austriaco, costringendo il tedesco Bruck a sputare su quell'effige e a salutare il vessillo italiano bianco, rosso, verde. Nel Teatro Comunale il pubblico salutò con vivissimi applausi gli artisti presentatisi sul palcoscenico con coccarde tricolori al petto e agitando una grande bandiera italiana spiegata. Al Tergesteo, sede della Camera di Commercio, la folla, durante la notte, decretò che il giorno seguente — 17 marzo 1848 — fosse festa nazionale e reclamò per il detto giorno la chiusura dei negozi, degli uffici governativi e della Borsa. Furono cambiati i nomi ai pubblici ritrovi. Per esempio: il Teatro Filodrammatico fu chiamato Teatro Costituzionale, l'Hotel Metternich fu chiamato Albergo Nazionale, il Caffè Stella Polare fu chiamato Caffè Gioberti, il Caffè Tommasi fu chiamato Caffè Tommaséo. Fu istituita la Guardia nazionale. Un gruppo di patrioti, fattosi dare un piroscafo dal *Lloyd austro-ungarico*, salpò alla volta di Venezia per portare la fausta novella della Costituzione ai fratelli della riva opposta. In un'assemblea popolare fu dichiarato "abusivo" l'aggregamento del 1815. Una Giunta municipale provvisoria protestò contro la Dieta di Francoforte che aveva deliberato l'annessione di Trieste alla Confederazione Germanica, affermando — essa Giunta — che Trieste era città italiana; mandò un indirizzo di simpatia alla rivoluzionaria Costituente Viennese; concretò un programma col quale reclamò scuole italiane, il riconoscimento della lingua italiana negli uffici governativi, la istituzione d'un'università o almeno d'una Facoltà Giuridica italiana. E la *Società dei Triestini* chiese che, ripristinati i patti del 1382, Trieste, non potendo passare all'Italia, fosse almeno dichiarata indipendente dalle altre province soggette all'Austria e avesse uno statuto

[1] Federico Seismit-Doda da Ragusa (Dalmazia) fu due volte ministro delle Finanze del Regno d'Italia (1825–1893).

proprio, autorità giudiziarie proprie, tutti i privilegi d'una città perfettamente autonoma e libera. La detta società, inoltre, respinse una proposta d'omaggio all'imperatore e congiurò di bruciare le navi austriache ancorate nel porto di Trieste.

I Lombardi e i Veneti, intanto, facevano la rivoluzione.

Alle cinque giornate di Milano e all'assedio di Venezia non mancarono gl'Italiani irredenti. Basta ricordare per tutti il triestino Giuseppe Revere poeta e drammaturgo insigne, collaboratore dell'*Italia del Popolo* di Mazzini, nelle cui colonne Garibaldi pubblicò i suoi primi appelli alla gioventù italiana.

E basta ricordare il seguente episodio.

Il governatore austriaco Pallfly, scacciato da Venezia, fuggiva verso Trieste. Durante la traversata, il vapore sul quale egli si trovava s'incontrò con un legno sul quale si trovava Seismit-Doda diretto a Venezia. Ecco come lo stesso Seismit-Doda narrò l'incontro in una pagina vibrante d'italianità:

I piroscafi si erano accostati. Appena si potè udire la voce, noi domandammo: *Qual nuove di Venezia?* Ci fu risposto con una sola parola: *Repubblica!* Io ebbi la forza di urlare: *Viva San Marco!* Ebbi quella forza che lì per lì mancò ai marinai, i quali caddero a terra senza voce, piangendo e levando le braccia a Dio per ringraziarlo di quella notizia. La più parte erano Dalmati! *Viva San Marco! Viva la Repubblica!* E questi gridi erano pugnalate al cuore di chi assisteva dall'altro bastimento allo spettacolo della nostra gioia, alla frenesia del nostro santo entusiasmo.

Quando il prioscafo diretto a Trieste ripigliò la sua via, lento e silenzioso come un corteggio funebre, quando le due navi, simboleggianti la morte e la vita, si staccarono, un tiro di fucile sul nostro bordo salutò pel primo la Repubblica Veneta. Dopo cinquant'anni la bandiera di San Marco tornava a sventolare sull'Adriatico, e gli *evviva* repubblicani risuonavano nell'aria. Quel colpo, o Veneziani, partiva da un fucile dalmata, era sparato da un Dalmata! Avvenimento degno di memoria duratura, se si pensi che gli ultimi tiri di saluto alla morente Repubblica di San Marco, cinquant'anni prima, si erano fatti dai Dalmati davanti alla Piazzetta, quando fu d'uopo a Venezia di cacciarli a viva forza e piangenti, per non averli difensori ultimi e disperati contro

l'Austria. Veneziani, come foste fratelli ai Dalmati nei giorni della gloria vostra, siatelo anche oggi che la nuove éra promette glorie maggiori a noi tutti! I Dalmati ve ne ricambieranno d'invincibile amore. Perchè da cinquant'anni, sappiatelo adesso pubblicamente, da cinquant'anni, in un'ignorata chiesetta della Dalmazia stanno sepolte le bandiere della Repubblica, alle quali i Dalmati piangendo resero nel 1797 i funebri onori. Se alle bandiere la terra, agli affetti nostri per voi fu sacrario il cuore. Io mi sento Italiano, come Dalmata nacqui. Nell'affetto che a un grande mio compatriota e maestro — a Niccolò Tommaséo — voi dimostrate, io vedo la caparra d'un'indissolubile unione dell'Italia con la Dalmazia.

L'Hagenaer, deputato triestino alla Costituente di Vienna, esclamava: "Io sono deputato d'Italia!"

Un giornalista tedesco, sempre nel 1848, alludendo alla forma geografica dell'Italia, asseriva malignamente ch'egli non sapeva come fosse fatto uno stivale. Gliel'insegnò *La Gazzetta di Trieste* con un pepato articolo, nel quale l'autore dimostrò tra l'altro che "l'Istria era appunto il tirante dello stivale italiano, come bene aveva compreso Metternich che, per infilare tale stivale, quel tirante s'era prima assicurato".

Dopo Curtatone e Montanara[1], *Il Giornale di Trieste* osava scrivere:

A placare i mani di Curtatone e Montanara, altro non resta che spingere l'iride italiana dal Ticino al Mincio, dal Piave all'Isonzo, fin dove stende la sua curva ultima il sorriso del cielo d'Italia.

Ed esprimendo i sentimenti della parte più vibrante dei Triestini, lo stesso giornale soggiungeva:

L'unico nemico che abbia oggi (1848) l'Italia è il Tedesco. Non parlo d'individui e nemmeno di popoli, ma di quall'atteggiamento che alla gente germanica è suggerito dagli antichi interessi e dalla moderna ambizione. Ma che importa se la Germania non

[1] A Curtatone e a Montanara (provincia di Mantova) il 29 maggio 1848 si scontrarono 40,000 Austriaci comandati da Radetzky con 6,500 studenti in maggior parte toscani, napoletani, modenesi, reggiani e non pochi triestini e trentini. Dopo un fiero combattimento di sei ore, i giovani italiani, che s'erano battuti come leoni, furono accerchiati, soverchiati e fatti prigionieri, mentre lasciavano numerosi morti e feriti sul terreno.

vuole la vittoria della causa italiana? Chi pensa a questo? Vogliono gl'Italiani, l'hanno giurato, e qui è tutto. La Germania protesti; ai campagnoli bavarici faccia indossare le assise militari dell'Austria e passare le Alpi. L'Italia darà piamente sepoltura anche ad essi.

Il Costituzionale, organo liberale dei Triestini, rivolgeva, sempre nel 1848, al popolo di Trieste il seguente appello:

Il volere essere in niun tempo altri da quelli che Iddio ci ha fatti, cioè a dire Italiani, sarebbe delitto in faccia allo stesso Dio, delitto in faccia ai nostri poveri morti che credettero vivere, credettero morire italiani; delitto, o Popolo, in faccia ai nostri figliuoli a cui dobbiamo illesa e bella e accresciuta lasciare l'eredità che abbiamo nascendo ricevuta. Se niuna terra ebbe ed ha tuttavia più sventure, quale altra mai illuminata dal sole ha anche un più bel nome, più glorie, più splendido e più maestoso passato della terra a cui, stretta da vincoli intessuti dalla mano di Dio, appartiene questa terra tua?

Altre manifestazioni pubbliche, comprovanti il sentimento di Trieste nel 1848, furono capitanate dal capodistriano Nicolò de Rin e dal triestino Costantino Cúmano uomini di tenace fede italiana fieramente avversi al dominio austriaco, dal giovane ardentissimo Francesco Hermet e dal giornalista Giulio Solitro. Si tentò perfino d'inalzare il tricolore italiano sul Castello. Vi furono scontri di carattere anti-austriaco tra soldati e cittadini. Vi furono moltissime zuffe tra mazziniani o liberali da una parte "e poliziotti misti a plebaglia straniera assoldata" dall'altra, con molti feriti e molti morti. Alcuni Triestini, giunti a bordo di piccoli legni da Venezia a Trieste, furono massacrati dai soldati austriaci, perchè allo sbarco gridarono: "Viva la Repubblica di Venezia e di Trieste!"

Così il movimento nazionale s'andava sempre più accentuando nelle regioni italiane soggette all'Austria. Il governo austriaco ne era preoccupatissimo. Per riparare, s'affrettò ad "importare", nelle dette regioni, numerosi stranieri "caninamente famelici e fidi". Ne importò più di 15,000 (tedeschi e slavi) soltanto a Trieste nel 1848, e ad essi diede subito ogni sorta di protezione e affidò,

con una sfacciataggine da sbalordire, i più importanti e lucrosi impieghi cittadini.

Un giornale locale salutò i nuovi arrivati con queste ingenue ma significative parole:

Viva a tutti! Pensate solo che questa (la città di Trieste) è terra italiana; italiano il lieto mare che la confina; italiano l'animo nostro. Serbate in cuore il sacro tesoro dei vostri affetti nativi che noi rispettiamo e ammiriamo. Ma voi, frattanto, rispettate il nostro amore per l'Italia, perchè noi siamo e saremo sempre italiani.

Il Costituzionale fu più esplicito. Esso accusò il governo austriaco "di essersi fatto avvocato dello Slavismo in Trieste, dopo avere favorito il Germanismo".

E *La Gazzetta di Trieste* corroborò l'accusa, scrivendo amaramente:

Ai cittadini che resta? Invasi da altri che essi i pubblici uffici, le pubbliche scuole; signoreggiato il libero pensiero da un'altra lingua che la loro; pasciuti degli odori che escono dalla cucina altrui, sono essi soli — i Triestini — i forestieri nella loro città. Addio signori che noi ospitammo, che i nostri padri accolsero con tanta, con troppa fiducia! Prometteteci almeno, o signori stranieri, che un giorno avremo un piccolo posto nel nostro cimitero.

Quale solida base di verità avessero le affermazioni dei giornali triestini del 1848, lo dimostrarono due postumi documenti, cioè: un memoriale mandato a nome di Trieste nel 1859 al Congresso di Parigi, e un opuscolo del Valussi e di Costantino Ressmann (altro triestino, più tardi ambasciatore d'Italia a Costantinopoli e a Parigi) pubblicato nel 1861 e diffuso per tutta l'Europa.

Diceva il primo:

L'Austria, con l'intrusione in Trieste dei Tedeschi e altri stranieri a lei dediti in tutte le cariche, in tutti gli uffici, sin nei seggi del nostro municipio, ordina e disordina a suo talento ogni nostro interesse, secondo i suoi fini, e con scuole tedesche e preti slavi e impiegati d'ogni stirpe, tenta imbastardire e farci dimenticare la nostra nazionalità italiana.

Diceva il secondo:

Nel 1848 e in appresso, veggendo che la natura insegnava ai Triestini di essere Italiani, si fece dai partigiani dell'Austria un grande sforzo contro tutto ciò che era italiano. Si spesero immense somme per corrompere la plebe, facendo da facchini prezzolati perseguitare tutti quelli che si pensava dovessero parteggiare per l'Italia. Le denunzie, le perquisizioni, le persecuzioni personali, i carceramenti, i processi, gli sfratti arbitrari, le violenze d'ogni sorta al sentimento italiano formano la storia di questi ultimi 13 anni.

Ma non solo a Trieste, anche nelle altre terre irredente, la lotta dell'italianità nel 1848 assunse vaste proporzioni.

In parecchie città della Dalmazia si formò la Guardia civica. A Spálato il popolo liberò dal carcere Antonio Baiamonti e Pietro Savo, due ardenti propugnatori della causa italiana.

A Trento (19 marzo 1848) il popolo insorse, inalberò la bandiera tricolore, sfidò le fucilate del picchetto austriaco di guardia, distrusse gli uffici delle Finanze, corse al palazzo municipale e impose che partisse subito per Vienna un'apposita commissione coll'incarico di domandare l'immediata separazione del Trentino dal Tirolo tedesco e l'aggregazione di esso al Lombardo-Veneto. L'indomani, 20 marzo 1848, il municipio di Trento istituì anch'esso la Guardia nazionale e rivolse alla cittadinanza un appello patriottico nel quale s'esprimeva l'augurio che l'esempio di Trento fosse seguíto dall'intero Trentino. Ad Ala, infatti, a Rovereto, a Riva, in altre città, nelle vallate, dappertutto, gli abitanti del Trentino issarono la bandiera italiana e si fregiarono i petti con coccarde tricolori.

Il 4 aprile 1848 Niccolò Tommaséo dirigeva alle popolazioni del Trentino un manifesto patriottico, incitandole a combattere e vincere nel nome d'Italia.

Il 6 dello stesso mese il generale Allemandi lanciava da Brescia un proclama col quale incitava i fratelli trentini a unirsi ai volontari per scacciare lo straniero dall'Italia.

E i giovani trentini non rimasero sordi: formarono una *Legione Trentina*, un corpo di *Franchi Cacciatori* e un altro di *Guide del Tirolo*, e corsero generosamente a difendere la

patria, cantando un inno scritto appositamente per loro dal poeta trentino Antonio Gazzoletti.

Le trombe squillano,
pronto è il fucile,
la patria misera
ci chiama a sè.

Di Carlo Alberto
seguiam le file.
Morte ai Tedeschi!
Evviva il Re!

Il governo austriaco, intanto, proclamava lo stato d'assedio a Trento; intimava ai cittadini, pena la vita, di consegnare le armi al Castello; inibiva loro di radunarsi in più di due per le vie; aboliva la Guardia nazionale; arrestava i più eminenti patrioti, tra i quali Gaetano Manci, Matteo Thum, Giuseppe Testi, Pietro Sizzo.

Per tutta risposta, il Gazzoletti, Angelo Ducati, Sigismondo Manci, Giovanni Danielli, Lorenzo Festi e Giambattista Zenelli trentini, andavano a Valleggio e presentavano a Carlo Alberto un indirizzo col quale il Trentino dichiarava d'aderire alla fusione col Piemonte. Un'identica domanda la presentavano a Carlo Alberto anche i trentini Vittore Ricci e Giovanni Rizzi.

Il 15 aprile 1848 ci fu uno scontro a Castel Toblino tra Italiani ed Austriaci. Rimasero prigionieri degli Austriaci ventuno volontari italiani tutti giovani. Condotti a Trento, essi furono presentati al comandante austriaco della guarnigione, colonnello Zobel, il quale disse loro cipigliosamente di prepararsi senz'altro a morire.

Gl'infelici passarono la notte esposti all'aria aperta, su poca paglia, nella fossa del Castello. Due monaci francescani li confortavano pietosamente. Al rullo prolungato del tamburo, una squadra di soldati austriaci si presentò all'imboccatura della fossa. Le vittime furono divise in due drappelli. Poi si cominciò l'esecuzione. Sotto gli occhi dei compagni si prese a bendare i giovani del primo drappello; ma i generosi, strappate le bende, le gettarono lontano, gridando: *Viva l'Italia!* Ci fu una salva . . ., di lì a pochi minuti un'altra . . ., e tutto fu consumato!

I prigionieri presi dai soldati austriaci il 29 maggio 1848 nelle battaglie di Curtatone e Montanara, furono condotti anch'essi oltre le Alpi, attraverso il Trentino.

Le popolazioni irredente fecero di tutto perchè nelle soste del passaggio fossero alleviate le sofferenze di quegl'infelici. Dalle finestre di Trento — gremite di persone piangenti e gridanti *Addio, fratelli italiani*! — piovevano quattrini e pane. Lungo le vie, chi diede cibo, chi vino, chi acquavite, chi tabacco. Fu una gara d'ospitalità veramente fraterna. Fu una commovente affermazione d'italianità, tanto più significativa, in quanto si videro i soldati austriaci fremere di rabbia.

A Bolzano i prigionieri ebbero ancóra cordiali accoglienze, e così a Bressanone, fino al Brennero, culmine delle Alpi Retiche alto 2,022 metri.

In quel punto — così il Tarugi, uno dei prigionieri — vi è un termine; su quel termine tutti scrivemmo il nostro nome e lo baciammo con entusiasmo, come per dire addio all'Italia nell'atto di mettere il piede su terra straniera, o perchè ci accarezzasse in cuore la speranza che un giorno la nostra patria avrebbe raggiunto quel suo confine naturale.

Nello stesso mese di maggio del 1848 i Trentini furono invitati dal governo austriaco a partecipare alle discussioni della Dieta del Tirolo. Essi opposero un energico rifiuto, considerando la loro partecipazione come dannosa alla popolazione del Trentino e in aperta contradizione coi diritti di nazionalità e di lingua che dalla Costituzione erano a loro garantiti. Inviarono, al contrario, deputati al Parlamento germanico per propugnare in quell'Assemblea i diritti italiani. Caratteristico e oltremodo coraggioso fu il discorso del deputato da Siessen, che spezzò l'ultima lancia dell'italianità nella seduta del 31 giugno 1848.

Riporto qui qualche brano del detto discorso:

Vorrei solo sapere — disse l'oratore — se il Tirolo italiano si chiama Tirolo italiano perchè abitato da Tedeschi! Vorrei sapere se le quattro cuoche, gli ostieri, gl'impiegati tedeschi che vi abitano si debbano chiamare l'elemento tedesco! Se volete fare un'enumerazione, io vi assicuro che troverete a Milano e a Roma

più elemento tedesco che a Rovereto; e in questo caso, andate: fate entrare anche Roma e Milano nella Confederazione germanica. Ci fu detto inoltre, o signori, che i deputati tirolesi italiani, con la loro comparsa in questo luogo, hanno riconosciuto in via di fatto di appartenere di buon diritto alla Germania. Certo che essi riconoscono il fatto di questa unione; ma è appunto l'unione di diritto ch'essi vorrebbero vedere sciolta; e per ottenere questo, dovevano venire qui. Se si fossero rifiutati di scegliere deputati, chi avrebbe qui difesa la causa della loro nazionalità? Voi avete inteso che l'oratore Prato si esprimeva con difficoltà. Ora io vi chieggo: se gl'Italiani del Tirolo meridionale avessero potuto scegliere persone che tutte sapessero parlare correttamente il tedesco, non le avrebbero essi scelte? Il fatto sta che non ne hanno, nè possono trovarne, appunto perchè sono Italiani. Ci fu detto che questa Assemblea nazionale dev'essere un'Assemblea tedesca e non italiana. Sia pure. Ma se essa dev'essere un'Assemblea tedesca, non costringete gl'Italiani a mandare qui deputati italiani. Lasciate che li mandino altrove, a una Dieta italiana, cioè verso quel punto dove son chiamati dalle loro simpatie, verso la loro patria italiana.

Infine i Trentini inviarono a Vienna i loro deputati col mandato di propugnare la separazione del Trentino dal Tirolo, e nello stesso tempo indirizzarono alla Costituente una petizione con 46,000 firme, nella quale chiedevano "che sia pronunziata la separazione amministrativa e parlamentare dei Circoli di Trento e Rovereto dalla parte tedesca della provincia del Tirolo, e che tra loro siano organizzati ed equamente distribuiti tutti i poteri, in base al nuovo sistema della nazionalità".

VI

I Trentini, i Triestini, gl'Istriani e i Dalmati per la Repubblica Romana retta dai triúnviri Mazzini, Saffi e Armellini e difesa da Garibaldi contro il papa, e per la Repubblica di Venezia retta da Manin e dal Tommaséo e difesa da Guglielmo Pepe contro l'Austria (1849).

Numerosi furono i Trentini, i Triestini, gl'Istriani e i Dalmati accorsi nel 1849 alla difesa di Roma "per sigillare col sangue — come disse Guerrazzi — il patto di famiglia

che lega tutti gl'Italiani intorno alla città eterna". Basta dire che dei 400 difensori caduti nella memorabile battaglia del 29 giugno 1849 — l'ultima che Garibaldi combattè per la vita e per l'onore della Repubblica Romana retta dai triúnviri Mazzini, Saffi e Armellini — 50 erano trentini e triestini.

E trentini, triestini, istriani, dalmati furono in gran parte i volontari che, dopo l'epica lotta e la gloriosa sconfitta, seguirono l'Eroe nella sua dolorosa ritirita, sulla spinosa via del patrio ideale. Trentini: Edoardo Negri, Francesco Mattedi, Pietro Bertelli, Achille Bevilacqua, Pietro Cavali, don Pietro Casanova, l'ingegnere Carlo Marzari, Domenico Dicio, i fratelli Pilade e Narciso Bronzetti.[1] Triestini: il poeta Giuseppe Revere[2], Filippo Zamboni[3], Giacomo Venezian[4], Sansone Levi "amicissimo di Garibaldi", Giovanni Bruffel.

Ancóra più numerosi furono i Trentini, i Triestini, gl'Istriani e i Dalmati accorsi, dopo la caduta della Repubblica Romana, alla difesa della Repubblica di Venezia retta da Manin e dal Tommaséo.

Si formò per quell'occasione una speciale Legione dalmato-istriana.

E da tutta la sponda orientale — così il giovane triestino Attilio Tamaro — fu portato un tributo di sangue e d'ingegno, di energia e di eroismo alla risorta Repubblica di San Marco. Ma nessun episodio incarnò in una linea tanto semplice e tanto rappresentativa quello accorrere di popoli adriatici verso il rinascente splendore di San Marco, quanto il seguente, ch'io stesso sentî raccontare con profonda commozione.

Appena incominciata la lotta tra la Repubblica e Radetzky, si presentarono al doge Daniele Manin due giovani dalmati, e uno

[1] Vedere l'elenco completo nel volume *Il Trentino nel Risorgimento* del dottor Levio Marchetti.

[2] Fu degli ultimi—col dottor Saglioso, con Francesco Dall'Ongaro e Aurelio Saffi — a lasciare Roma.

[3] Lo Zamboni e Pietro'Pieri, rimasti ultimi sul campo di battaglia, salvarono la bandiera che poi consegnarono al Municipio di Roma capitale d'Italia dopo il 1870. Allo Zamboni scrisse Garibaldi: "Voi la salvaste la bandiera della gioventù italiana con pericolo della vita vostra preziosa".

[4] Il Venezian, battutosi valorosamente, riportò ferite gravi. Cessò di vivere il 2 luglio 1849 nelle braccia dell'amico e concittadino Revere. La povera madre, accorsa frettolosa, lo trovò cadavere; poco dopo morì anch'essa di dolore.

di loro gli disse in pretto dialetto veneziano: *Nostro pare ne ga mandà a difender San Marco. El ne ga dito che 'l ga inteso che el Leon de San Marco se xe risveglià, e che de tre fioi do el li manda a lú. El ne ga dito che saludemo el Doxe e che ghe diremo che se no 'l fusse troppo vecio el sarave vignù anca lui a basarghe la man e a difenderlo!* Nostro padre ci ha mandato a difendere San Marco. Egli ci ha detto di avere inteso che il Leone di San Marco s'è risvegliato, e che di tre figlioli due li manda a lui. Egli ci ha detto: *Salutatemi il Doge e ditegli che se non fossi troppo vecchio, sarei venuto anch'io a baciargli la mano e a difenderlo.*

I due giovani presero parte all'assedio, compiendo prodigi di valore.

Dei volontari trentini, basta ricordare il capitano Federico Martini, Giovan Battista Adami, Domenico Bonetti, Bartolomeo Malfatti e Tommaso Sar (questi due ultimi, ricordáti nei documenti dell'epoca per l'intrepidezza dimostrata "nei momenti più ardui"). E dei triestini: Leone Fortis, Giovanni Orlandini (l'antico editore de *La Favilla* di Trieste e auditore maggiore del Governo provvisorio di Venezia), Filippo Coen, Francesco Erberti, Costantino Cúmano, Samuele Romanin (insegnante alla patriottica cattedra di Storia Veneta istituita dalla nuova Repubblica), Francesco Poropat, Arturo Zanetti, Pietro Romano, Francesco Herbert e il pittore Giuseppe Gattesi. Degl'istriani: Nicolò Vergottini, il capitano Marcantonio Borisi che in un'arditissima sortita da Mestre prese parecchi cannoni agli Austriaci, Alessandro Almerigotti, Alessandro Godina, Giuseppe Dragicchio, Giuseppe Rubinisch, Pietro Scarboncich, Luigi Ritozzo, i fratelli Giovanni e Lodovico Almerigotti e Giovanni Bevilacqua (quest'ultimo si battè come un leone sotto il forte Montedoro, tre volte a Campalto e più di venti volte su zattere). E dei dalmati: Seismit-Doda e il più illustre di tutti — Niccolò Tommaséo — ch'era allora ministro della pubblica istruzione nella Repubblica di San Marco.

VII

I Trentini, i Triestini, gl'Istriani e i Dalmati per la loro italianità dal 1850 al 1858. Il lor filiale contributo di sangue alla seconda guerra di liberazione dell'Italia contro l'Austria (1859).

La lotta dell'italianità, dopo il 1849, continuò con lo stesso fervore di prima nel Trentino, a Trieste, nell'Istria e nella Dalmazia, nonostante le severe misure preventive e repressive della polizia austriaca.

Nel 1850, per esempio, andò a Trieste Giuseppe Verdi. Il grande maestro fu accolto con gioia e con feste dai cittadini.

Nello stesso anno vi andò, invece, l'imperatore Francesco Giuseppe. "Ma l'accoglienza — scrisse il console sardo al suo governo — che il monarca austro-ungarico ricevè fu freddissima, per non dire glaciale· non si sentì un solo *evviva* in tutta la giornata".

Il 30 agosto 1851 l'imperiale e reale rappresentante del governo austriaco a Gorizia, preoccupato della caratteristica foggia di vestire dei patrioti italiani, foggia troppo significativa, pubblicava la seguente "Notificazione" che è un gioiello di tirannia e d'amenità a un tempo:

Il portare vestiti che per la loro singolarità si distinguono in modo sorprendente dall'ordinario costume del paese e che, nella loro singolarità appunto, portano l'impronta di una provocante arroganza, non sono da tollerarsi. Annovero pure tra simili distintivi i cappelli bruni di ala larga che da poco anche in questo paese della corona presero piede e spesso vengono portati unitamente ad un vestito di colore eguale. Sono intimamente convinto che dagli abitanti delle unite contee principesche di Gorizia e Gradisca questi e simili distintivi non vengono portati che per manía d'imitazione, ed è perciò che vorrei vedere allontanato tutto ciò che potrebbe dar motivo di sospettare sul retto contegno di questa popolazione. Invito quindi gli abitanti delle contee di Gorizia e Gradisca a non usare simili vestiti ed altri segni distintivi, e a riguardare questo mio eccitamento per un'amichevole ammonizione, onde non essere costretto a dover imputare al

contravventore della medesima una tendenza perversa, che da me verrebbe soppressa con vigore e irremissibilmente punita.

I più ardenti patrioti, stanchi di tante vessazioni, decisero di preparare un moto rivoluzionario. Esso doveva scoppiare a Trieste il 1° marzo 1853, e da Trieste doveva estendersi nelle altre città irredente. Ma il governo austriaco, che non dormiva, seppe la cosa e s'affrettò a provvedere, ingrossando le file delle spie, aumentando le guarnigioni, consegnando i soldati nelle caserme, raddoppiando i posti di guardia, sguinzagliando pattuglie di ferocissimi birri a destra e a sinistra, procedendo a perquisizioni e ad arresti, esiliando (il giovane dalmata Carlo Boscovich, per esempio, dovè andarsene in Piemonte), sopprimendo giornali (furono soppressi tra gli altri *Il Giornale di Gorizia* fondato a Gorizia da Carlo Favetti e *L'Eco dell'Isonzo* di Gradisca diretto da Federico Comelli), condannando distinti cittadini a duro carcere (Giuseppe Grioli, "per la propaganda liberale da lui fatta in Dalmazia", fu condannato a 12 anni di lavori forzati).

Nel 1856 Antonio Gazzoletti e parecchi altri Italiani irredenti, nell'imminenza del Congresso di Parigi, pensarono di richiamare per mezzo di Cavour l'attenzione del Congresso stesso sul Trentino, allo scopo di ottenere il distacco di detta regione dalla Confederazione Germanica. Uno d'essi andò appositamente a Torino a conferire col ministro. E questi rispose esprimendo la propria simpatia per i Trentini e assicurando ch'egli non si sarebbe lasciata sfuggire l'occasione di parlare nel Congresso a favore delle loro aspirazioni nazionali. Demetrio Livaditi fondava il periodico *La Ciarla* a Trieste, dove già si pubblicavano *Il Pungolo* e *Quel che si vede e quel che non si vede*. E in tutt'e tre i giornali scrissero per la causa nazionale, tra gli altri, il poeta Arnaldo Fusinato e Leone Fortis. Contro il Fortis fu anzi spiccato mandato di cattura, e i giornali furono poco dopo soppressi. Nell'Istria fu pubblicato *Il Popolano d'Istria* da Michele Facchinetti autore d'una *Preghiera Nazionale* (imparata a memoria dagli abitanti dell'intera regione) che finiva così: "Fate dunque, o Signore, ch'io

ami la mia nazionalità, e l'amore e la stima per essa sieno motivo ad amare e stimare le altre in un vincolo di pace e di felicita". E il Tommasèo scriveva lettere e volumi, in cui fortemente vibrava il cuore della Dalmazia per l'Italia.

Si giunse così fino al 1859.

In quell'anno l'Austria attaccò il piccolo Piemonte che s'era già alleato con la Francia. Al cominciamento della guerra, si videro accorrere in Italia volontari da Trieste, dall'Istria,[1] dal Friuli; si vide accorrere in difesa della patria la più bella gioventù trentina, nonostante le baionette austriache assiepate sui confini, nonostante i pericoli d'ogni sorta.

Il governo di Vienna, in data 7 giugno 1859, invano decretava a nome dell'imperatore che, per la seconda leva, il contingente del Circolo di Trento "doveva essere di 1,000 uomini". I giovani gli sfuggivano e correvano con infrenabile slancio ad arrolarsi sotto le bandiere di Vittorio Emanuele II e di Garibaldi.

Oltre a ciò, una deputazione trentina si presentava al campo e consegnava allo stesso Vittorio Emanuele II un indirizzo così concepito:

Adesso che a fianco del generoso vostro alleato, l'imperatore dei Francesi, per una via seminata ad ogni passo di vittorie e benedizioni, vi inoltrate trionfalmente per le province italiane redente nel vostro nome, permettete, o Sire, che anche gl'Italiani della provincia di Trento vengano per mezzo nostro innanzi a voi a ripetere che la Croce di Savoia non è meno invocata tra i loro monti di quello che lo sia nelle altre parti dell'Alta Italia; che nella provincia di Trento siete pure aspettato e sospirato liberatore e re. Noi non ci nascondiamo, o Sire, la gravità delle circostanze eccezionali in cui versa il nostro paese di fronte alla gloriosa vostra impresa; ma appunto perchè infeudati mostruosamente alla Germania, noi sentiamo con più calore d'essere italiani e strettamente legati alla causa dei nostri fratelli, da voi con tanta lealtà e valore propugnata. Il cielo, o Sire, non cessi un istante di prosperare le vostre armi; e possano l'esultanza e la gloria che, compiuta la grande impresa, circonderanno il vostro trono, non essere

[1] Il professore Antonio Coiz nativo di Faedis (Friuli), che si trovava ad insegnare nell'Istria, corse con tutti i suoi allievi istriani ad arrolarsi in Italia. E il ricco goriziano Francesco Verzegnasse a Torino mise tutto sè stesso e le sue sostanze a disposizione dei volontari.

contristate dal pianto di Italiani curvi ancóra sotto il peso dell'oppressione straniera.

E, quasi contemporaneamente, le donne dell'Istria mandavano a Vittorio Emanuele II la bandiera per il 37° reggimento fanteria e un indirizzo nel quale dicevano:

Sono le donne dell'Istria, le quali, pegno di loro lagrime, vi mandano e offrono questo stendardo, questo labaro di certa salute, ricordando che l'Istria fu sempre italiana, da quando Roma antica le affidava la guardia del varco più geloso d'Italia.

Nella vittoriosa campagna, i volontari delle regioni italiane irredente si fecero non poco onore. Basta ricordare, per tutti, i trentini Leopoldo Martini tenente dei bersaglieri e Narciso Bronzetti garibaldino.

Il Martini cadde a San Martino (24 giugno 1859) mentre impavido guidava la sua compagnia di bersaglieri all'assalto.

E Narciso Bronzetti, capitano della terza compagnia del primo reggimento *Cacciatori*, dopo avere valorosamente combattuto a fianco del Duce a Varese e a San Fermo, l'8 giugno 1859 con soli 94 volontari mise in fuga presso Seriate 1,500 soldati austriaci. "Con uomini di tanta prodezza — scriveva subito Garibaldi — si può tentare ogni impresa! L'Italia deve ricordarli eternamente".

Nel combattimento di Treponti, poi (15 giugno 1859), il Bronzetti compì gesta degne d'epopea. Una prima palla austriaca lo colpì gravemente al braccio destro, facendogli cader di mano la spada. Il valoroso la raccattò con la sinistra, l'agitò in alto quanto potè, gridando *avanti*! — E continuò a pugnare.

Avanti! Avanti!
Gridava il forte, e rotto il destro braccio
Da una palla, con l'altro alzò la spada,
E *avanti;* e un'altra palla anche il sinistro
Gli ruppe, e *avanti!* E così tutto sangue
Correa contro il nemico.

Finchè una terza palla lo colpì mortalmente al fianco.

Insin che il fianco
Gli trapassò una terza, e pur due passi

Far volle, e *avanti, avanti sempre!*
Gridava ai suoi cadendo.

Allora fu portato all'ambulanza e poco dopo a Brescia in casa del suo amico Basilio Maffezzoli. Ivi il maggiore Ferrari gli portò una medaglia d'argento al valor militare. "Garibaldi — disse il portatore a Narciso Bronzetti — ti manda questo segno d'onore per il fatto di Seriate, riservandosi di darti condegna ricompensa per quello di ieri".

L'eroe trentino sorrise, accostò la medaglia alle labbra, la baciò e spirò, mentre il maggiore Ferrari gli leggeva una lettera che lo stesso Garibaldi gli aveva mandato insieme con la medaglia.

Carissimo Bronzetti,

Voi siete certamente al disopra di qualunque elogio, e avete giustamente meritato il nome di *prode dei prodi* della nostra colonna. Il vostro coraggio superò la gravità delle vostre ferite, e voi sarete reso ai vostri compagni d'arme.

Accogliete un fraterno abbraccio dal vostro amico

GIUSEPPE GARIBALDI.

A guerra finita, nonostante la croce militare di Savoia e la nomina a maggiore decretate alla memoria di Bronzetti, Garibaldi, in un indirizzo ai Trentini, si faceva interprete della gratitudine nazionale verso quei generosi, scrivendo loro:

Furono centinaia e centinaia i concittadini di Bronzetti che si distinsero nella sacra guerra, ed una parola non s'é alzata per segnalarli alla gratitudine nazionale. Valga la mia debole voce a supplire in parte all'involontario oblio e a ricordare dei più nobili e generosi della famiglia italiana, su cui posano meritamente le nostre speranze di redenzione.

I Trentini risposero all'Eroe:

Per quanto un paese italiano ancóra oppresso dallo straniero può esultare, il Trentino esulta per quello che avete detto in favor suo, e con quanto v'ha di più nobile nell'anima, vi ringrazia e vi benedice dal fondo delle sue sciagure. Il sangue versato e gli amari disinganni e tutti i dolori patiti, gli paiono più sopportabile cosa, poichè gli valsero il vostro encomio, la vostra raccomandazione.

Il municipio di Trento, inoltre, e i municipi delle altre città del Trentino (Rovereto, Ala, Tione, Condino, Levico, Strigno) reclamarono a Vienna la loro aggregazione al Veneto, "aggregazione richiesta dal sentimento nazionale del Trentino e dai suoi bisogni e interessi". Con tale passo, i Trentini miravano a condividere le sorti del Veneto, "quando questo sarebbe stato unito all'Italia".

E alla fine dell'anno (dicembre 1859) anche i Triestini redassero un memoriale, che poi fu presentato al Congresso Europeo, col quale chiesero che Trieste, "impregiudicati i diritti unitari, fosse dichiarata città libera, facente parte della Confederazione italiana, come pareva dovesse essere del Veneto".

VIII

I Trentini, i Triestini e gl'Istriani nella spedizione dei Mille. Il lor filiale contributo di sangue all'intera guerra del 1860 per la liberazione dell'Italia Meridionale e dell'Italia Centrale. La feroce reazione degli Austriaci. Le somme di denaro raccolte dagl'Istriani per la causa nazionale. La bandiera italiana delle donne triestine a Garibaldi (1860).

Garibaldi, nel preparare la spedizione dei Mille, apriva una sottoscrizione nazionale per un milione di fucili. A Trieste, nel Trentino, nel Friuli orientale, nell'Istria, come in tutto il resto d'Italia, la notizia di tale fatto suscitò un entusiasmo straordinario. Nei caffè, nelle farmacie, in ogni pubblico ritrovo, nelle case private, non si parlava d'altro e apertamente. In talune città dell'Istria fu perfino issata la bandiera italiana. Sui muri apparvero iscrizioni inneggianti a Garibaldi e a Vittorio Emanuele II e imprecanti al governo austriaco e alle sue spie.

La polizia, fremente, ricominciò a perquisire a reprimere. A Trieste, presso un certo Brul, essa sequestrò più di 3,000 fucili e represse violentemente una dimostrazione anti-austriaca. A Gorizia, per tema di dimostrazioni italiane, proibì la passeggiata al Corso. Furono messe in istato d'assedio parecchie città. Furono sequestrati i beni

dei cittadini trentini e istriani emigrati in Italia. Un autografo imperiale comandò alle sentinelle di pattuglia sui confini di fare "il più esteso uso delle armi contro le persone che tentassero di varcarlo".

Ma nonostante tutto, i Trentini riuscirono ad affermare i loro sentimenti con un'espressione plebiscitaria ricompendiata in questa concisa formula: "I sottoscritti dichiarano essere desiderio e voto generale del paese l'annessione di questo al regno costituzionale di Vittorio Emanuele II". Nell'Istria potè girare una poesia popolare con la quale si mettevano in ridicolo il Borbone e la corte di Vienna. E fucili ne furono mandati non pochi in Italia.

All'alba del 6 maggio 1860, sui piroscafi *Piemonte* e *Lombardo*, salpati dal fatale scoglio di Quarto, vi erano coi Mille di Garibaldi i trentini Antonio Armani, Oreste Baratieri, Ergisto Bezzi, Tomaso Bolcego, Domenico Toller detto Giacomo Costa, Giovanni Dalla Costa, Antonio Fattori, Giuseppe Fontana, Enrico Isnenghi, Giuseppe Leonardi, Filippo Manci, Quirino Moiola, Pietro Martori, Anselmo Sterchele, Filippo Tranquillini, Camillo Zancani e Attilio Zanotti (i trentini Enoch Bezzi, fratello d'Ergisto, il conte Francesco Martini e Luigi Marcabruni, non avendo fatto in tempo a imbarcarsi a Quarto, raggiunsero Garibaldi a Milazzo), Francesco Bidischini del Friuli Goriziano, Marziano Ciotti di Gradisca ed altri. A Trieste fu arrestato un intero comitato d'arrolamento. E a causa appunto del rigore spiegato dal governo austriaco, si dovè se molti Triestini non poterono raggiungere la gloriosa spedizione.

Giuseppe Fontana e Camillo Zancani della quinta compagnia, Filippo Manci, Filippo Tranquillini ed Ergisto Bezzi detti i tre moschettieri, furono i primi alla memorabile salita del colle di Calatafimi e poi all'assalto di Palermo. Ed Enrico Isnenghi e Giuseppe Leonardi, sebbene feriti, continuarono a combattere leoninamente sulle barricate di quest'ultima città.

Il garibaldino Giuseppe Cesare Abba[1] tratteggiò da

[1] L'Abba fu uno dei più eroici volontari dei Mille, poi illustratore incomparabile della leggendaria spedizione, autore di parecchie altre opere storiche, educatore insigne. Silenzioso e modesto, visse in povertà decorosa, non facendo mai pompa dei servigi resi alla Patria. Fu nominato senatore del Regno il 6 giugno 1910. Morì cinque mesi dopo (1838–1910).

par suo il profilo di parecchi suoi commilitoni trentini. Lo Zancani: "con le tempie già grige, e di cui le rughe profonde dalle nari agli angoli della boca dicevano ch'egli sapeva il dolore da un pezzo, ma che pure aveva l'aria quasi lieta e pareva dicesse continuamente a sè stesso: *allegri e avanti*!" — Lo Zanotti: "sempre giovane e bello, sempre largo del suo gran cuore".— L'Isnenghi: "semplice come acqua d'altissima vena, umile in tutto come un fraticello di quelli a cui san Francesco diceva per via le sue soavi cose". — Il Tranquillini: "fiore di gioia e di cortesia da stare in un canto di gesta".— Il Manci: "così verginale nella finezza del viso, che, se non fosse stata la prestante persona, si sarebbe detto ch'era una donzella in uniforme garibaldina; e così amante del pericolo, che per un rischio in cui ci fosse stato da contendersi il posto, era capace di corrucciarsi col più caro degli amici".— Ergisto Bezzi: "pareva il Ferruccio staccatosi da una tela del 500 per venir vivo a vedere che cosa sapessimo fare noi, dopo avere tanto cantato col Mameli d'avere il suo cuore (il cuore del Ferruccio), d'avere la sua mano (la mano del Ferruccio), e che meriterebbe da solo (il Bezzi) che giustizia di popoli desse all'Italia la terra di Trento dov'è Cusiana, il borghetto in cui egli (il Bezzi) nacque".

Molti altri Trentini raggiunsero Garibaldi in Sicilia, e lo seguirono in tutta la campagna dell'Italia Meridionale fino a che il Borbone non fu interamente sconfitto. Basta ricordare Pilade Bronzetti, fratello di Narciso "il prode dei prodi". Nella sanguinosissima mischia corpo a corpo che seguì a Milazzo il 20 luglio 1860 tra Garibaldini e Borbonici, Pilade Bronzetti, che aveva il grado di maggiore, prese tre pezzi d'artiglieria al nemico. E più tardi a Castel Morone con soli 270 uomini respinse per undici ore di séguito gli assalti di ben 4,000 Borbonici, finchè, ferito di baionetta e colpito da una palla al petto, cadde, brandendo la spada, per non più rialzarsi.

Sdegnoso
d'ogni resa, Leonida novello,
ruotando a cerchio la fraterna spada,
lanciavasi a morir per mezzo i mucchi
dei fraterni cadaveri.

Garibaldi, annunziando il fatto nell'Ordine del giorno alle sue legioni, disse:

A Castel Morone, Pilade Bronzetti, emulo degno del fratello, vi ripeteva uno di quei fatti che la storia porrà certamente accanto a quelli compiuti dai Leonida e dai Fabi.

E nelle sue *Memorie*, l'Eroe soggiunse:

Accanto alle immortali famiglie dei Cairoli e dei De Benedetti e a tante altre per cui veste lutto l'Italia, poniamo quella dei Bronzetti. Il maggiore dei fratelli cadde contro gli Austriaci a Treponti; il secondo cadde non meno eroicamente a Castel Morone. Resta un terzo ai vecchi genitori, e anche questo, col consenso degl'incomparabili vegliardi, è pronto a dar la sua vita all'Italia.

Nella liberazione d'Ancona si distinsero non poco i trentini Leopoldo Tonini e il capitano Venturi. Quest'ultimo s'adoperò attivamente per promovere un'insurrezione nello Stato Romano soggetto al pontefice.

Insomma i Trentini pugnarono dovunque nel 1860: nelle file dell'esercito piemontese, come nelle file degli eserciti dell' Italia Centrale e dell'Italia Meridionale. Non ci fu brigata in cui non se ne sia contato più d'uno. Se ne trovarono 22 nella brigata Modena, 29 nella brigata Reggio, 101 nella brigata Bologna, quasi 100 nel battaglione Vignola e 120 nell'esercito meridionale. Circa 500 in tutto. Furono ben poche le province italiane che poterono contarne altrettanti. Prendendo per base la proporzione della leva ordinaria ch'era allora in Italia del 25 per mille, il Trentino, con una popolazione di 330,000 abitanti, avrebbe dovuto fornire 825 soldati. Ne fornì invece 500, ossia due terzi del contingente ordinario. Ma bisogna considerare ch'esso — il Trentino — dovè pur sostenere il peso delle leve austriache forzate.

Anche il contingente dato dal Trentino alla legione dei Mille fu oltremodo lusinghiero. Nella proporzione di mille sopra 25 milioni d'abitanti (tanti ne contava l'Italia nel 1860), il Trentino, in ragione della sua popolazione, avrebbe dovuto dare 13 uomini circa. Ne diede invece 17.

Benchè in numero minore, i Triestini e gl'Istriani corsero anch'essi ad arrolarsi sotto le bandiere italiane nel 1860, e si

distinsero per eroismo al pari degli altri fratelli irredenti. All'assalto di Perugia, per esempio, una compagnia composta tutta di Triestini e Istriani contribuì efficacemente (18 settembre 1860) a far prigioniero l'intero presidio papalino composto di ben 8,000 mercenari irlandesi.

Inoltre, furono raccolte grandi somme di denaro in mezzo alle popolazioni delle regioni irredente per la guerra italiana del 1860 contro l'Austria.

Rimettendo appunto una di tali somme, il comitato triestino per i soccorsi a Garibaldi scriveva al comitato di Milano:

> Trieste ebbe generose vittime nel 1849 a Roma; ha i suoi figli quest'anno (1860) nell'esercito del magnanimo Re Galantuomo e sotto le bandiere dell'invitto Garibaldi. Ma non cessarà di fare ancóra, per quanto sarà possibile eludere la irrequieta vigilanza dei sátrapi austriaci.

C'era davvero la vigilanza. E di che sorta! Michele Buono, organizzatore d'un comitato segreto d'arrolamento a Trieste, veniva condannato a morte (pena commutatagli poi in 20 anni di lavori forzati). Un marinaio di Pola, a cui in piazza proruppe irresistibile il grido di *Viva l'Italia*! fu istantaneamente ammazzato a sciabolate da un ufficiale austriaco. A Pirano l'operaio Mistare, per avere pronunziato parole di simpatia all'indirizzo dell'Italia, fu da una sentinella austriaca freddato con una fucilata alla testa. Le famiglie dei disertori erano vessate nel peggiore dei modi. Il governo austriaco le costrinse perfino a rimborsare il prezzo delle divise militari. E promise vistosi premî pecuniari a tutti quei soldati "che avessero denunziato gl'incitatori alla diserzione e coloro che avessero tenuto discorsi ostili al governo medesimo". Nel Trentino il commissario austriaco conte Hohenwarth diramava una circolare con la quale ordinava alle autorità governative "di energicamente opporsi alle idee di separazione del Trentino dal Tirolo che avevano già messo nel paese radici così profonde"; minacciava "esser ben deciso a reprimere inflessibilmente ogni dimostrazione d'italianità da qualunque parte venisse; destituiva Gaetano Manci podestà di Trento; destituiva

anche il podestà di Rovereto e i podestà d'altre città irredente, e li sostituiva con commissari politici fidi al governo di Vienna; faceva eseguire le solite requisizioni d'armi, le persecuzioni, le proscrizioni, le bastonate, ecc. Molti cospicui cittadini — quali ad esempio l'ottantenne Tito De Bassetti, nonchè Giovanni De Pretis e Antonio Marsili — furono arrestati a capriccio, maltrattati ed esiliati.

Ma tanta rabbia repressiva non valse a frenare l'irrompente sentimento d'italianità che animava le popolazioni del confine orientale d'Italia.

Il comitato nazionale dell'Istria, mandando a Milano (sempre nel 1860) una somma di denaro raccolta per la causa italiana, scriveva:

L'Istria, povera di tutto, fuorchè di generoso sentire e d'amore sviscerato per la comune madre Italia, non può che una tenue somma offrire; ma la conforta il pensiero che l'Italia saprà, meglio che all'offerta, avere riguardo al coraggio con cui essa fu raggranellata sotto la pressura della polizia austriaca, e al cuore con che essa — l'Istria — la porta sull'altare della Patria. Dite al prode Garibaldi che l'Istria non fu mai nè sarà mai timida di sacrifici per la fausta causa nazionale. Ma ditegli pure che quel giorno ch'egli potrà libera far sventolare l'itala bandiera sulle adriatiche sponde, l'Istria risorgerà con giubilo a rafforzare di marinai la patria armata e dei più coraggiosi suoi figli il patrio esercito. Vedranno allora le province sorelle d'Italia se l'Istria —che l'Austria tanto oppresse per toglierle lingua ed affetti e per ispegnerne, se fosse stato possibile, il nazionale sentimento — sia indegna di loro. Per ora non le è dato che, nel segreto dell'anima e fra le torture, di proferire gli adorati nomi d'Italia, di Vittorio Emanuele II e di Garibaldi; ma allora questa voce segreta, nello slancio di centinaia di migliaia di cuori, si cambierà in altissimo grido che, echeggiato dalle nostre colline, si propagherà per la marina fino alla spiaggia opposta dell'Adriatico golfo.

E le donne triestine, mandando a Garibaldi (sempre nel 1860) una bandiera italiana fatta da loro, scrivevano:

Il dispotismo austriaco, se trovò del proprio conto, una volta, di migliorare le condizioni materiali di Trieste aprendo la città all'immigrazione ed ai traffici, nelle troppo decantate prerogative nascondeva un mortifero veleno, vero premio alla spontanea

dedizione! Poichè, dopo averla asservita in onta ai più solenni patti, adoperò per anni e anni ogni arte e prepotenza allo scopo di spegnere le naturali aspirazioni di civile e morale progresso e rapirle costumi e linguaggio. Non ne volle risparmiato l'onore, e la chiamò fedelissima. Menzogna, o Generale! Perchè nè le soverchierie dei dominatori, nè gli áulici decreti, nè la viltà dei degeneri patrizi, valsero a snaturare il nostro popolo che è rimasto italiano e che ora più che mai ha la coscienza dell'imprescrittibile suo diritto di appartenere all'italica famiglia. E la bandiera che noi, donne triestine, vi mandiamo in dono, vi sia debole pegno del sentimento nazionale che rianima i nostri mariti e i nostri figli. Aggraditela, o Generale, e accordatele l'onore di guidare con essa alcune delle vostre intrepide legioni nelle future battaglie dell'indipendenza nazionale e della libertà comune, col grido di *Viva l'Italia! Viva Vittorio Emanuele II!*

E il comitato triestino-istriano, facendo quasi un bilancio alla fine del 1860, diceva in un apposito proclama:

Molti dei nostri figli hanno sparso il loro sangue sui campi gloriosi di Calatafimi e di Castelfidardo; molti altri gemono nelle carceri austriache o vanno esulando.

E Carlo Ferrari soggiungeva poco dopo:

Trieste a envoyé des sommes considérables au comité garibaldien. Une bonne partie des ses enfants était avec les vainquers de Palerme et de Milazzo. Les dames triestines ont brodé des drapeaux, envoyé des adresses aux soldats de l'indépendance italienne.

Infine il giornalista triestino Pacifico Valussi ricordò uno dei tanti episodi mostranti lo spirito d'italianità da cui erano infiammati le popolazioni del confine orientale d'Italia nel 1860.

Fu un tempo — così egli scrisse — in cui un bravo Goriziano mi portò una somma di denaro che i suoi compatrioti volevano spendere per la patria italiana. Era il momento in cui la flotta borbonica era stata catturata da Garibaldi e consegnata all'ammiraglio Persano, ma che veniva abbandonata dai marinai. Da alcuni Triestini, Istriani e Friulani si fece un fondo per attirare marinai dell'Istria, del Veneto e della Dalmazia per la nuova flotta italiana; e ci si riuscì; e Cavour gradì il dono e intese molto bene il doppio vantaggio del togliere i marinai all'Austria e farli propri.

Ora dico qui ai patrioti goriziani, che quella somma, depositata fiduciosamente nelle mie mani, andò ad arricchire quel fondo.

IX

Le lotte dell'italianità sostenute con indomabile fierezza dai Trentini, dai Triestini, dagl'Istriani e dai Dalmati contro l'Austria dal 1861 al 1865.

Il 6 giugno 1861 moriva Cavour. Le popolazioni del confine orientale d'Italia manifestarono il loro cordoglio in forme diverse (chiusura di negozi, astensione dai teatri e dalle feste, ecc.), nonostante le misure di precauzione prese dalla feroce polizia austriaca per impedire o almeno celare tali manifestazioni.

Dal 1861 al 1865 ci fu tregua d'armi in Italia, ma non sospensione di lotta per la causa nazionale. Il Trentino non volle saperne di restare unito al Tirolo tedesco. Quando si fecero nel 1861 le elezioni per la Dieta di Innsbruck, a Trento andarono a votare soltanto un cittadino e 27 impiegati del governo austriaco; a Rovereto 7 cittadini e 70 impiegati; a Riva 2 cittadini e 16 impiegati. Nelle altre città neppure gl'impiegati si mossero. Nel tempo stesso gli elettori di Trento sottoscrivevano la dichiarazione di astenersi dalle elezioni, "nella certezza di rispondere in tal modo al sentimento universale del paese". Dichiarazioni analoghe furono sottoscritte dagli elettori di parecchie altre località. E dei deputati eletti, i due che si recarono alla Dieta proposero subito la separazione del Trentino dal Tirolo. Gli astenuti indirizzarono alla Dieta stessa il voto che, "più della loro parola, potesse essere eloquente il generale silenzio, e che la solenne manifestazione della volontà popolare non avesse a rimanere lungamente incompresa".

Proprio nelle elezioni del 1861 il partito liberale italiano a Trieste conquistò con grandissima maggioranza i pubblici poteri (Congresso municipale e Dieta provinciale). E d'allora in poi li tenne sempre vittoriosamente, "come

conseguenza della sua ottima e patriottica amministrazione".

Nello stesso anno 1861 la Dieta dell'Istria, invitata dal governo austriaco ad eleggere i suoi rappresentanti al Parlamento di Vienna, metteva nell'urna le schede con la parola *nessuno*.

Dopo un anno il governo austriaco riconvocò i comizi elettorali nel Trentino. Gli elettori andarono a votare in massa, facendo trionfare i capi del partito italiano autonomo. Questi s'affrettarono a indirizzare un memoriale alla Dieta per dichiarare ch'essi non sarebbero intervenuti alla sessione, e un memoriale al Consiglio dell'Impero per chiedere il distacco del Trentino dal Tirolo.

L'8 giugno 1862 gli emigrati istriani e triestini mandavano in dono a Garibaldi alcune carte geografiche e idrografiche del mare Adriatico e della costa orientale dell'Adriatico, con questa lettera:

Generale! L'Istria e Trieste anélano di essere sottratte al giogo straniero. Dio voglia che anche il piccolo presente che i loro figli vi offrono, vi giovi, e presto, a far paghi i loro voti.

Garibaldi, in data 10 giugno 1862, rispondeva:

Io so che l'Istria e Trieste anélano a frangere le catene con cui le avvince l'odiata signoria straniera; so che affrettano col desiderio il compimento del voto di essere restituite alla madre Italia. Io ho fede non sia lontano il giorno delle ultime vittorie, da cui sarà suggellato il completo riscatto nazionale.

Il 16 agosto 1862 le popolazioni del Trentino, di Trieste e dell'Istria, trasmettendo una cospicua somma di denaro al comitato veneto centrale costituitosi per l'erezione d'un monumento a Cavour in Torino, scrivevano al presidente del comitato stesso:

Noi trasmettiamo a Vostra Signoria illustrissima quest'offerta, pegno del sentimento patriottico che anima le popolazioni italiane stanziate in terra ancóra straniera, aspiranti anch'esse a far parte della grande famiglia italiana che, dopo tanti secoli di sventure, tutta vuole raccogliersi in unità sotto lo scettro costituzionale di re Vittorio Emanuele II.

L'11 novembre 1862, dopo un processo clamoroso contro il giornale *Il Tempo* di Trieste, che dimostrò quanto intelligente, intensa e ardita fosse in quell'anno la propaganda italiana fra i Triestini, furono condannati a pene non lievi il professore Paolo Tedeschi e Antonio Antonaz redattori del giornale stesso.

Nei primi del 1863 il gentile poeta veronese Aleardo Aleardi, il quale per incarico di Manin aveva nel 1848 rappresentato la Repubblica di Venezia a Parigi, consegnava a Vittorio Emanuele II un albo che le donne istriane, trentine e venete avevano destinato a Maria Pia, figlia dello stesso Vittorio Emanuele II, andata sposa a Luigi I re del Portogallo. All'atto della consegna, il poeta pronunziava queste parole:

> Sanno (le donne istriane, trentine e venete) che quando Iddio, nelle passate mischie, scïava dal vostro petto animoso le palle, gli era per serbarvi allo splendido mandato di compiere l'Italia. E quando poi avverrà che la nostra bandiera sventoli sulle torri italiane di Trento, e dalle italiane colline di Pola si specchi nell'Adriatico nostro, allora voi potrete dire con sublime orgoglio, o Sire, al vostro figliuolo: *Umberto, io ti ho composto la più bella corona d'Europa.*

Vittorio Emanuele II accolse benigno e incoraggiante il dono e i voti.

Nei primi del 1863 il governo austriaco respinse la domanda di distacco del Trentino dal Tirolo tedesco, e intimò ai deputati astensionisti "che, se nel giro di otto giorni, essi non si fossero affrettati ad accettare e ad esercitare il mandato loro affidato, avrebbero avuto luogo le nuove elezioni". I deputati non si presero neppur la briga di rispondere all'intimazione imperiale. E alle nuove elezioni, essi furono tutti rieletti. Allora inviarono le loro dimissioni alla Dieta, dichiarandosi "lieti d'avere potuto offrire ripetutamente ai loro conterranei l'occasione di manifestare ai poteri legislativi dello Stato, in via legale e costituzionale, quale fosse la tendenza della pubblica opinione, quale la ferma volontà del paese". Le elezioni successive diedero risultati affatto identici.

Il 17 febbraio 1863 ad un veglione tenutosi nel teatro di Gorizia intervennero 7 fanciulle e 16 giovanotti goriziani vestiti tutti da garibaldini. La polizia austriaca li arrestò, e fece condannare al carcere duro i caporioni, tra i quali Nepomuceno Favetti e Clemente Riaviz, anche perchè questi due avevano l'abitudine nelle dimostrazioni di salutarsi col motto: "Uno, due, tre, Garibaldi nostro re", e perchè il Riaviz aveva imposto a un Austriaco di baciare il ritratto di Garibaldi.

Il 14 maggio 1863 il governo austriaco scioglieva il Consiglio comunale di Pisino per avere aderito alle feste centenarie di Firenze.

Nel 1864, a ispirazione di Mazzini e ad incoraggiamento di Garibaldi, fu promossa nel Trentino un'azione militare contro l'Austria. Ne era capo il garibaldino Ergisto Bezzi, che potè raccogliere intorno a sè i suoi correligionari e commilitoni dei Mille (Fontana, Manci, Tranquillini, Zancani ed altri) e organizzare un comitato centrale a Trento e sotto-comitati nelle città minori. Il governo austriaco seppe la cosa e fece arrestare i principali cospiratori (una quarantina), li trascinò a Innsbruck e ivi li fece condannare da un tribunale militare per il reato d'alto tradimento chi a 9, chi a 7, chi a 5, chi a 3, chi a 2 anni di carcere duro.

Mazzini, che tanto dolore aveva provato nell'udire l'insuccesso dell'impresa, scrisse al Bezzi:

> Una linea speciale a voi, per dirvi che io vi ammiro ed amo sempre più. So che quanto poteva farsi fu da voi fatto. Dio sa s'io mi dolgo della posizione in cui vi trovate; ma siete giovane e l'avvenire farà lunga giustizia a voi e alla vostra fede. Chiedetemi quanto possa giovarvi, liberamente come fratello a fratello.

Anche Garibaldi scrisse al Bezzi:

> Voi faceste il vostro dovere da quel valoroso che siete, e sin quando gl'Italiani non seguano gli esempi d'uomini come voi, essi staranno meritamente sotto la verga e il disprezzo universale. Ai vostri prodi compagni del carcere un saluto dall'anima.

Nel 1864 un senatore italiano conservatore dichiarava imprudentemente in piena Assemblea "non essere Trieste nelle aspirazioni del governo italiano". Da Trieste fu

immediatamente spedita una protesta firmata dai più ragguardevoli cittadini e da centinaia di patrioti. Il governo austriaco volle che alla prima occasione il Consiglio comunale di Trieste dimostrasse falsa quella protesta. Nel gennaio 1865, convocato il Consiglio, il podestà, ch'era a quei tempi un asservito all'Austria, propose d'annullare l'importanza della protesta, deliberando a unanimità di voti un atto d'omaggio all'imperatore Francesco Giuseppe. I consiglieri, illuminati e guidati dal patriota De Rin, respinsero fieramente la proposta. Il Consiglio fu naturalmente disciolto. Ma i Triestini ebbero poco dopo la sodisfazione di vedere pubblicata nella *Gazzetta Ufficiale* del Regno d'Italia una dichiarazione del governo italiano, smentente l'asserzione del senatore conservatore ed affermante che Trieste non solo era italiana, e quindi nelle aspirazioni della madre patria, ma anche per "quel fatto" — per avere cioè respinto la proposta d'omaggio all'imperatore Francesco Giuseppe — essa s'era resa quanto mai benemerita della causa italiana.

Si pubblicarono nel frattempo numerosi libri comprovanti l'italianità e le aspirazioni di Trieste, dell'Istria e del Trentino, mentre il Tommaséo, instancabile, continuava con magnifici scritti a difendere l'italianità della Dalmazia, affermando tra l'altro che ivi la lingua italiana s'era sempre mantenuta purissima e vi si adoperava "meglio di quella che aveva adoperato, parlando e scrivendo, lo stesso conte di Cavour".

X

Il filiale contributo di sangue dei Trentini, dei Triestini, degl'Istriani e dei Dalmati alla guerra del 1866 contro l'Austria per l'indipendenza e l'unità d'Italia. Trieste e l'Istria per la loro annessione alla madre patria (1866).

Il 1866 passò come una bufera. Appena si seppe che stava per scoppiare la guerra tra la Prussia e l'Italia alleate da una parte contro l'Austria dall'altra, il comitato degli

emigrati triestini e istriani perorò subito la causa delle terre irredente con indirizzi rivolti a Vittorio Emanuele II ed ai membri del governo italiano.

Alfonso La Marmora, allora presidente del Consiglio dei ministri, rispondeva a tutti:

Le passate rivalità di Trieste e Venezia sono cose viete, da mettersi a fascio con quelle di Firenze e Pisa, di Venezia e Genova e di cento altre città italiane. I paesi d'oltre Isonzo sono italiani quanto qualunque altra provincia di confine della grande penisola. Sentono di esserlo, e se sieno decisi a volerlo, lo dica la lunga serie di manifestazioni coraggiose e calorose che si succedono da tanto tempo nei loro principali centri. Lo scioglimento ripetuto dei Consigli municipali di Trieste, di Gorizia, di Pisino, di Capodistria; lo scioglimento delle Diete provinciali di Trieste e di quelle dell'Istria (Parenzo) perchè non vollero mandare nessuno al Reichsrath di Vienna; gli stati d'assedio del 1848 e 1859; i processi e le condanne politiche pronunziate specialmente da quell'epoca in poi; la proibizione perfino di carte geografiche, di opere storiche e diplomatiche che trattano serenamente di quei paesi; infine i bandi, gli arresti, la sospensione delle libertà personali che s'annunziano in questi giorni, sono fatti che non si distruggono oramai con l'usata frase *dei pochi malintenzionati, del pugno di faziosi favoriti dal Piemonte.*

Il governo austriaco, dal canto suo, prese come ostaggi parecchi dei migliori cittadini di Trieste e dell'Istria (Martino Zucchi, Gioacchino Lovisoni, l'Hermet, l'Hortis, il Madonizza, il Rismondo ed altri), e li internò nelle fortezze dell'Impero.

Ma tanta violenza non sgomentò i patrioti irredenti. Quelli emigrati mandarono in data 18 giugno 1866 a Vittorio Emanuele II, che stava per recarsi al campo, l'augurale saluto dei fratelli oppressi, dicendo:

I Triestini e gl'Istriani saranno i guardiani dell'Alpe Giulia: di quell'Alpe che, violata troppe volte dallo straniero, è complemento necessario e sicurezza del territorio nazionale. Essi vi daranno in mano quella Pola che, fin dall'epoca romana porto militare italiano, l'Austria ha ormai convertito in minaccia di tutta la nostra costa adriatica. Essi vi daranno quella Trieste che l'Austria vorrebbe malamente far credere di pertinenza

germanica. È voce di popolo che vi chiama in quelle parti. È grido di dolore e di speranza che erompe dal cuore di Italiani che vi invocano Liberatore e vi salutano loro Re.

La gioventù trentina, triestina, istriana e dalmata, infatti, accorse con mirabile slancio d'amore e di fede ad arrolarsi sotto le patrie bandiere (nell'esercito regolare e tra le file garibaldine), e si battè con supremo ardore contro gli Austriaci.

A Custoza (24 giugno 1866) cadde, tra gli altri, il tenente Leonardo D'Andri di Capodistria, mentre pugnava leoninamente alla testa della sua compagnia rimasta priva di capitano. Egli era volato in aiuto dei granatieri di Sardegna duramente provati a Monte Croce, aveva assaltato impetuosamente quell'altura, l'aveva ritolta agli Austriaci e aveva ripreso nello stesso tempo i cannoni e i prigionieri italiani di cui i nemici s'erano impossessati conquistando il monte. All'eroico D'Andri fu, per questo fatto, decretata la medaglia d'oro.

Nella stessa battaglia di Custoza cadde anche da prode il trentino Claudio Zambelli. E si distinsero per il loro valore i triestini Adolfo Sartori, R. Donaggio, Davide Milla, Giovanni Druffel, Eugenio Popovich, Gustavo Buchler, Enrico Ferolli, gl'istriani Girolamo Gravisi, Giovanni Vascon, Michele Gallo, Carlo Depaugher, Domenico Grio, Domenico Vidacowich, Pietro Madonizza, il goriziano Angelo Mazzini, il trentino professore Alberto Eccher e tanti altri d'ogni età, d'ogni condizione sociale, tutti uniti in un sol pensiero: l'Italia.

Alla vittoria di Monte Suello nel Trentino (3 luglio 1866), riportata da Garibaldi sugli Austriaci superiori di numero, meglio armati e in una posizione favorevole, contribuì non poco l'eroismo di Ergisto Bezzi, del Tranquillini, del Ciotti, del Fontana, del Manci, dello Zancani, del Leonardi, dello Zanolla e di altri Garibaldini irredenti.[1]

La notizia di questo brillante fatto d'armi e la notizia che il generale Medici era giunto felicemente coi suoi a poche miglia da Trento e che il generale Cadorna, all'estrema

[1] A Monte Suello rimase ferito lo stesso Garibaldi da una palla di fucile a una coscia.

destra dell'esercito di spedizione, marciava su Trieste, sollevarono immensamente gl'Italiani, i quali s'erano giustamente turbati alla notizia del disastro di Custoza.

I patrioti delle regioni irredente il 9 luglio 1866 mandarono a Vittorio Emanuele II un indirizzo in cui dicevano con fede:

> Tutta la terra italiana deve essere sgombra dallo straniero, e la intera cerchia delle Alpi, nostro naturale confine, deve essere in nostro potere.

A Condino nel Trentino, dove il 16 luglio 1866 Garibaldi combattè e vinse un'asprissima battaglia contro gli Austriaci, caddero i triestini Giuseppe Donati, Filippo Faienz, Giuseppe Fenali, Pietro Chiozza, il Capria e il Walfer.

Due giorni dopo (18 luglio 1866), Garibaldi, che in pochi giorni aveva liberato dagli Austriaci gran parte del Trentino, lanciava a quelle popolazioni il seguente proclama:

> Trentini! I vostri voti e quelli di tutta l'Italia stanno per essere sodisfatti. L'inno di guerra della nostra moschetteria vi porta di eco in eco il primo appello della libertà; vi porta un fraterno saluto. Voi intendete l'uno e l'altro. Combatteremo insieme per la libertà e l'unità d'Italia. E qui, su questi vostri monti, formidabili difese per uomini liberi, serrandoci le mani, giureremo insieme il *Finis Austriae*, la fine della dominazione straniera.

Nella battaglia navale di Lissa (20 luglio 1866), combattuta tra la flotta italiana contro la flotta austriaca, cadde col nome d'Italia sulle labbra il guardiamarina Giovanni Ivancich dalmata. E non pochi Italiani irredenti caddero a Bezzecca nel Trentino (21 luglio 1866), dove Garibaldi combattè e vinse contro gli Austriaci una terribile battaglia che durò 12 ore di continuo e costò all'Eroe 1,522 volontari morti.

Il 25 luglio 1866 Garibaldi riceveva dal governo del re d'Italia il famoso telegramma: "armistizio firmato; evacuate Trentino", al quale l'Eroe rispondeva con l'ancor più famoso: "obbedisco".

Poco dopo (fine di luglio 1866) i Consigli comunali e il clero dei paesi italiani liberati — Storo, Darzo, Lodrone,

Magaza, Dondone, Condino, Cimego, Dono, Bersone, Drione, Strada, Tiarno di sopra, Tiarno di sotto, Ledro, Bezzecca, Pieve di Ledro, Mezzolago, Molina e Barcesina, Legos, Piè di Ledro, Biacesa, Concei, Locca, Eugenise e Leusumo — sottoscrissero e mandarono a Vittorio Emanuele II il seguente indirizzo:

Ora che i maggiori sacrifici sono consumati, ora che l'Austria crolla da tutte le parti, ecco che la diplomazia si pianta tra noi e i nostri diritti, le voci di pace prendono tuttavia maggiore consistenza, sicchè temiamo di noi, mentre avevamo tanto sperato nei giorni addietro. In queste angustie, noi volgiamo una parola a Voi che non foste mai sordo alle grida di dolore mosse dai vostri popoli, e vi diciamo che noi siamo Vostri, perocchè siamo parte della Nazione italiana e pronti a dare per essa sostanze e vita.

Parecchie famiglie trentine — come i Bresciani di Riva, i De Pretis di Cagnò, i Ducati e i Molinari di Trento, gli Eccheli di Ala, i Tavernini di Drò, i Weiss di Strigno — diedero due fratelli alle schiere italiche nella guerra del 1866 contro l'Austria. La famiglia dei conti Sizzo De Noris di Trento ne diede tre. E alcune famiglie — come gli Eccheli di Brentonico, gli Jagher di Trento e i Martini di Riva — ne diedero perfino quattro.

Si guadagnarono la medaglia d'argento al valore il triestino Enrico Ferolli gravemente ferito a Cimego; la menzione onorevole il triestino Rodolfo Donaggio; e medaglia e menzione i trentini Carlo Chimelli, Virgilio Inama, Giovanni Jagher, Alessandro Zinis, Carlo De Pretis, Ferdinando Rinaldi, Virgilio Covi e Filippo Tranquillini. A Ergisto Bezzi, per gli straordinari servigi resi durante l'intera campagna, fu offerta la croce d'ufficiale dell'Ordine Militare di Savoia. Ma egli la rifiutò, come aveva altra volta rifiutato la croce di cavaliere.

Si distinsero molto nelle schiere garibaldine anche i trentini Oreste Bronzetti fratello dei due caduti eroi Narciso e Pilade, il sottotenente Pietro Montanari e Carlo Tivaroni.

Alcuni volontari delle terre italiane irredente erano disertori recenti dell'Austria. Essi quindi misero a doppio rischio la loro vita. Tali, ad esempio, il tenente Paolo

Cortella di Storo, Cernio' Battorchi di Tione e Isidoro Canella di Riva.

I primi d'agosto 1866 alcuni patrioti trentini, capitanati dai garibaldini Francesco Martini e Filippo Manci, tentarono nel Trentino un moto rivoluzionario tendente ad aggregare all'Italia — allorquando si sarebbe stipulata la pace — almeno il territorio del Trentino occupato con l'armi da Garibaldi. Ma il tentativo fallì.

L'11 agosto 1866 i Triestini lanciavano il seguente appello:

Perchè l'Italia sia guarentigia di pace all'Europa, conviene ricomporla a famiglia politica in tutta la sua unità fisica. Monca e quindi scontenta e bramosa d'altri eventi, ella avrebbe in sè la ragione, la necessità di nuovi dissidi e conflitti. Ora le Alpi, che formano l'eterno confine della penisola italiana, girano a tergo dell'Istria non meno che nel Piemonte, nella Lombardia e nella Venezia propriamente detta. Dal Tricorno, il gigante alpino che s'alza sulle scaturigini dell'Isonzo, le acque di questo fiume corrono tra le regioni della Drava, della Sava e della Culpa e quelle dell'Adriatico: fra contrade che mandano il tributo delle loro acque ai piani del Danubio e quindi al Mar Nero, e le terre che s'inchinano sullo stesso continente italiano. La Natura, dunque, non fu incerta nemmeno sui termini orientali d'Italia, elevando sì notevole barriera tra paesi che in tutto il loro aspetto recisamente si differenziano, tanto che anche l'occhio il più profano scorge tosto — allo stesso colore dell'aria, alla temperatura, alla vegetazione — quanto va disgiunto per legge inalterabile.

L'Isonzo — l'áulico confine d'Italia imposto da Vienna — è un fiumicello che rimarrebbe pressochè ignorato se all'Austria, che è astuta nelle sue previsioni, non fosse caduto in mente di formare, poc'oltre alla sua riva destra, una distinta amministrazione per la luogotenenza imperiale di Venezia. Anche quando su quel fiume imperavano i conti di Gorizia e poi gli arciduchi d'Austria di faccia alla Repubblica di Venezia, non era già tutto il suo corso il confine dei due domíni, ma lo erano altre acque minori e fossati e segni di privati poderi più addentro nella pianura e nei monti del Friuli. Quelli che appresero in confuso ad arrestare la Venezia al suo oriente in sui margini d'un rigagnolo, dovrebbero, per mostrarsi conseguenti alle loro reminiscenze storiche, cedere all'Austria anche la destra dell'Isonzo già accordatale per la fretta degli ordinamenti non definiti nella formazione del napoleonico

Regno d'Italia, quando pure a fronte di ciò s'annetteva al Regno stesso il dipartimento dell'Istria.

Céssino, dunque, una buona volta, tali nozioni di geografia d'Italia, le quali non hanno altro fondamento che le insidiose mire delle cancellerie austriache. La geografia della nostra patria va per noi imparata dalla natura che ce l'ha fatta, e non da quanto vorrebbe l'Austria per serbarsi le sue lusinghe di rivincita.

E conoscere e volere casa nostra è il primo nostro dovere. Nè le civili nazioni potrebbero non ammettere ch'esso è pure un nostro diritto.

E gl'Istriani, insieme con gli stessi Triestini, pubblicavano un lungo memoriale indirizzato a Visconti Venosta ministro degli Esteri del Regno d'Italia, del quale riporto qui i punti più salienti:

L'Istria è un posto avanzato rimpetto alla Laguna, alla quale s'attacca mediante gli isolotti e le paludi di Grado, di Marano e di Aquileia; è un pezzo di terreno staccatosi dalle nostre Alpi e scivolato sul nostro mare; è a noi quasi un molo d'approdo e un luogo di necessaria poggiata. Le flotte Romane e le Venete svernavano a Pola che, secondo il mutare dei secoli, fu succursale d'Aquileia, di Ravenna, di Venezia. Le triremi venete s'armavano nel porto di Quieto, a Umaga, a Pirano. A Venezia non si va senza rasentare le coste dell'Istria. E nessuna flottiglia, sia pure a vapore, potrebbe avventurarsi in certe stagioni nell'alto Adriatico, senza pericolo d'essere portata sotto il cannone di Pola.

L'Istria, d'altronde, è italiana per origini, veneta per dedizione spontanea. Caduta con Venezia nel 1797, in forza della malaugurata pace di Campoformio, è giusto, è necessario che con Venezia risorga. Altrimenti non ne soffrirebbe la sola Istria, ma Venezia con essa.

L'Istria formò parte del primo Regno d'Italia dal 1805 al 1810, e quando ritornò in mano dell'Austria, questa le promise d'accomunarla alle altre province venete, promessa che, *more austriaco*, non fu mantenuta.

Nel 1848 e nel 1859, a clamore di popolo e mediante i suoi municipi, l'Istria domandò e ridomandò d'essere riunita alla Venezia, ma sempre indarno, poichè l'Austria rimase padrona della situazione.

Col nuovo assetto che va necessariamente a prendere l'Europa, è interesse della civiltà che ci sia un'Italia sodisfatta e forte. Ma tale non sarà mai, senza la frontiera delle Alpi Retiche,

Carniche e Giulie, e senza i porti che la natura offre sulle cost dell'Istria a compenso di quelli che le ha negato sulla restante costa adriatica da Otranto a Grado.

La nazione italiana tiene gli occhi rivolti all'esercito e alla flotta; pensa che una mossa sollecita e ardita, dandoci il possesso di quelle terre, renderebbe più agevole il cómpito della diplomazia e offrirebbe alle popolazioni istriane la bramata occasione di smentire coi fatti i dubbi che alcuno ancóra si ostina a movere sul conto loro.

Nel ripetervi, adunque, l'alta fiducia che abbiamo in voi, nell'intero Consiglio dei ministri e nell'illustre suo capo (il Lamarmora), non vi taceremo la speranza che la memoria del grande Cavour ispiri — al Governo italiano e al Comando dell'armata di terra e di mare — deliberazioni pronte, concordi ed energiche, quali sono richieste dall'interesse e dall'onore dell'Italia che aspetta, ma che sente, in ogni sua parte, piena la vita, e vuole essere intera per esistere non solo, ma per occupare il posto che ormai le compete in Europa.

Nell'Istria non sorge un villaggio, in cui si agiti un poco di vita civile, il quale non sia prettamente italiano. Il carattere nazionale è spiccatissimo in ogni sua esteriore manifestazione. I vestiti, gli usi, le tradizioni, le leggende, i canti, i proverbi sono italiani. Italiana l'architettura, dall'umile casolare al palazzo pretorio. Italiani il pennello e lo scalpello che decorano i templi e i pubblici edifizi. Italiane le istituzioni di beneficenza. Italiane le leggi dei Comuni, di cui si hanno luminosi esempi fin dal 1200 in quegli statuti municipali foggiati alla romana che regolavano la vita civile dei paesi istriani, mentre in non poche illustri parti della rimanente Italia non vi erano che signori feudatari e plebe inconscia di sè, del suo passato e del suo avvenire.

E bellissimi nomi vanta l'Istria tra i migliori ingegni d'Italia. Chi non conosce il Vergerio e il Flaccio, tanto celebri nella storia della Riforma? il Sartorio, caposcuola delle scienze mediche? il Muzio, emulo del Davanzati? l'economista Carli? il Carpaccio e le sue tele? le musiche del Tortini, per non dire di cento altri che dall'Istria partirono ai seggi più onorati nelle università di Padova, di Pisa, di Bologna e di Roma?

Con Roma le province istriane furono sempre una regione d'Italia e, fuori dubbio, la più gelosa, come lo provano i monumenti militari di cui ammiriamo ancóra oggi i numerosi avanzi e che lungo la frontiera aveva eretto il genio romano di contro alle nazioni d'oltr'alpe. E quando queste nazioni, fiaccata

la potenza dell'Impero, irruppero di là per depredare e asservire l'Italia, furono le genti della Venezia marina e dell'Istria che, meglio di tutte le altre, ne salvarono il nome, costituendosi a reggimento di liberi Comuni (i primi Comuni italiani del Medio Evo) sotto la nominale signoria di Bisanzio.

L'Istria continuò poscia sempre generosa la lotta contro gli stranieri (Longobardi, Slavi, Ávari, Unni, Saraceni), sì che sappiamo fin d'allora che l'onore del vessillo veneto o, come dicevasi in quei tempi, l'onore del Beato Marco, era affidato alle galee e alle armi alleate degl'Istriani.

Ma tutto fu inutile. Nel trattato di pace firmato a Praga il 24 agosto 1866, le giuste pretese dell'Italia sopra le terre irredente, e neppure su quella parte del Trentino conquistata dalle schiere garibaldine, non furono riconosciute dalla Prussia vincitrice, nè dalla Francia mediatrice. Così che il governo di Vittorio Emanuele II, in virtù della pace firmata a Vienna il 3 ottobre 1866, dovè accontentarsi della sola Venezia ceduta dall'imperatore Francesco Giuseppe a Napoleone III, e da costui all'Italia.

Quanto dolore recasse un tale fatto nel cuore delle popolazioni italiane irredente si può bene immaginare, quando si consideri che il triestino Pietro Brambilla era stato informato dal ministro Visconti Venosta che Trieste era la meta delle operazioni militari italiane e che l'avvocato Hortis e Carlo Combi triestini erano stati perfino nominati vice-commissari del governo italiano (uno per Trieste e l'altro per l'Istria), e l'avvocato Carlo Boggio, morto nella battaglia navale di Lissa, aveva con sè il decreto del governo italiano che lo nominava commissario regio di Trieste.

Il 14 novembre 1866 Vittorio Emanuele II fu di passaggio a Udine. Al corteo, che si formò in suo onore, parteciparono più di 3,000 fra Triestini, Goriziani e Istriani, con una bandiera italiana abbrunata portata da un Garibaldino dei Mille, nativo di Trieste.

Il giorno dopo, la bandiera fu consegnata dagli stessi tremila al sindaco d'Udine, insieme con una cospicua somma di denaro come contributo degl'Italiani irredenti per l'erigendo monumento a Daniele Manin, il glorioso doge della Repubblica di Venezia del 1848–1849.

XI

Il filiale contributo di sangue dei Triestini, degl'Istriani, dei Trentini e dei Dalmati all'Italia per la presa di Roma (1867–1870).

I patrioti delle regioni irredente d'Italia, sebbene colpiti in pieno cuore dalle disillusioni del 1866, non disperarono. Essi continuarono a lavorare alacremente per la causa unitaria.

Nel maggio 1867 il governo italiano consegnava al governo austriaco i carcerati che questo aveva lasciati nel Veneto. Li mandava alla stazione di Gorizia, ove dalla custodia dei carabinieri italiani passavano a quella dei gendarmi austriaci. I Goriziani accolsero festosamente i carabinieri italiani, offrendo loro cibi e sciampagna, e inneggiando all'Italia, a Garibaldi, a Vittorio Emanuele II. Ma, durante la notte, la polizia austriaca operò varî arresti. E, dopo un paio di giorni, quattordici cittadini di Gorizia, tutti giovani, furono condannati ciascuno a due settimane di carcere con due giorni di digiuno.

La sera del 12 luglio 1867, numerosi bifolchi sloveni, aizzati e protetti dalla polizia austriaca, scesero processionalmente a Trieste, urlando *Viva l'Austria*! e provocando i cittadini. Questi — al grido di *Viva l'Italia*! — respinsero i provocatori. La processione fu rinnovata il giorno dopo (13 luglio 1867). I cittadini affrontarono e disarmarono i bifolchi sloveni. Ma intervenne la truppa imperiale austriaca, la quale fece fuoco sui Triestini, uccidendone due e ferendone ventitrè.

Quando Garibaldi fu "arrestato" nel settembre del 1867 per ordine del governo dei Savoia, l'indignazione avvampò anche nei petti degl'Italiani irredenti. Al comizio tenutosi a Udine nel Teatro Minerva il 26 settembre 1867, Pietro De Carina di Monfalcone, protestando a nome delle province italiane soggette all'Austria, ricordò tra l'altro le parole rivolte dall'Eroe pochi mesi prima in Udine stessa agli emigrati irredenti:

Parole di speranza e di conforto — disse l'oratore — che non tardarono a varcare i non lontani confini, trovando giuliva eco dalle balze delle Alpi Giulie alla roccia del Timavo, alle rive del Quarnero e — mi trema il cuore al dirlo — nei sepolcri ancóra cruenti del Trentino, nei sepolcri delle povere vittime del 1866.

All'impresa garibaldina dell'Agro Romano furono rappresentate tutte le regioni irredente d'Italia. Il trentino Giuseppe Fontana fu il primo a passare i confini dello Stato Romano alla testa di 150 volontari. Dei 75 Italiani formanti il manipolo condotto dai fratelli Cairoli, manipolo che doveva portare aiuto ai patrioti rivoluzionari di Roma, 20 erano triestini. Nel combattimento di Villa Glori (23 ottobre 1867) caddero morti 4 Triestini ed altri furono feriti, tra i quali Gian Luigi Vidali e Pietro Mosettig "che giacque presso Giovanni Cairoli". Tra quelli che riuscirono a penetrare nella città, vi fu anche Giusto Muratti triestino. E nel lanificio di Giulio Ajani in Trastevere, accanto alla eroina Giuditta Arquati-Tavani e agli altri generosi, furono massacrati dai papalini (lo stesso giorno 23 ottobre 1867) anche Francesco Mauro ed Enrico Ferolli triestini, e rimase ferito Rodolfo Donaggio pure triestino.

A Monterotondo (25 ottobre 1867), fu il capitano garibaldino Marziano Ciotti di Gradisca che appiccando il fuoco alla porta del forte, lo costrinse alla resa e decise così della vittoria riportata in quel giorno da Garibaldi sulle truppe pontifice. Il Duce scrisse poi al Ciotti:

Voi, alla testa della vostra compagnia, siete entrato il primo a Monterotondo sulle rovine incendiate e fumiganti della Porta San Rocco. Io vi proclamo un prode, e valorosa la compagnia da voi comandata. Le donne italiane onoreranno i campioni delle glorie nostre. Ed io vi dò un bacio fraterno.

GARIBALDI.

A Mentana, poi, nella gloriosa sconfitta, combattè eroicamente il medesimo Marziano Ciotti di Gradisca; caddero morti sul campo il triestino Luigi Pecenco e il sedicenne Giuseppe Pollini di Rovereto; rimase gravemente ferito e prigioniero il trentino Ergisto Bezzi. E degli ultimi a lasciare il campo furono il capitano Emilio Maddali

triestino, Carlo Tivaroni dalmata, Federico Cuder istriano e Vincenzo Cattarozzi trentino.

A Firenze s'agitarono per il riscatto di Roma i fratelli Tommaso e Rovis Vusio dalmati.

A Padova cospirarono, anche pel riscatto di Roma, gli studenti universitari istriani con a capo Domenico Lavisato.

Garibaldi, rispondendo da Caprera a un saluto che gli stessi studenti gli avevano mandato, li incitava con queste parole:

> Grazie per la gentile attestazione d'affetto. Italiani d'origine e d'aspirazioni, l'Italia non deve dimenticarvi, siccome una delle più belle gemme della sua corona. Io darò volentieri la vita per l'affrancamento completo della famiglia nostra.

Il 20 aprile 1868 si celebrarono le nozze del principe ereditario Umberto di Savoia con la cugina principessa Margherita. Gli emigrati irredenti, in un indirizzo a Vittorio Emanuele II, porsero da Udine il saluto augurale delle terre trentine e giulie agli sposi, ricordando in pari tempo che "solo per l'affrancamento di dette terre potrà risplendere senza macchia l'astro d'Italia".

Nello stesso anno 1868 gl'Istriani, i Triestini, i Friulani e i Dalmati ebbero il conforto di vedere approvata dal governo italiano la legge con la quale "tutti gl'Italiani delle province che non fanno ancóra parte del Regno d'Italia, sono pareggiati nell'esercizio dei diritti civili ai cittadini dello Stato, purchè, presentando l'atto di nascita e adempiendo alle altre formalità volute dalla legge, s'inscrivano nei ruoli d'un Comune italiano di loro scelta".

A Benedetto Cairoli,[1] che aveva presentato e sostenuto la detta legge fin dal 1862, i membri del comitato nazionale di Gorizia scrissero ricordando che, se incrollabile fu e sarebbe stata la fede dei Goriziani nell'Italia, "pur aveva d'uopo che i fratelli liberi talvolta la rinfrancassero con una parola di conforto"; lo ringraziavano d'averla detta lui tale parola, lo pregavano di ricordarsi sempre di loro e invocarono il giorno del riscatto.

[1] Figlio del dottor Carlo e di Adelaide Bono, la nuova madre dei Gracchi; uno dei più belli eroi del Risorgimento italiano; deputato al Parlamento nazionale per 30 anni e ministro degli affari esteri sotto Umberto I (1825-1889).

Benedetto Cairoli rispose:

Il vostro infortunio è danno comune e sarebbe anche vergogna se dimenticato; ma ciò non è. Ricorderò i vostri patimenti e le vostre ardite dimostrazioni e la cooperazione presa alle battaglie, ai lutti, alle glorie della patria italiana? La causa vostra è adunque anche nostra, e io mi auguro di poterle consacrare non solo la parola, ma anche la vita. Accogliete, o benemeriti cittadini e degni interpreti del pensiero nazionale, un fraterno saluto.

Nel luglio 1868, in séguito a varie manifestazioni liberali del municipio e della cittadinanza di Trieste, un'altra torma di bifolchi slavi, aizzata e spalleggiata dal battaglione territoriale austriaco composto anche di Slavi ferocissimi detti *bácoli* (blatte), assalì brutalmente i Triestini al grido di *Viva l'Austria*! I Triestini respinsero gli assalitori al grido di *Viva l'Italia*! La lotta continuò il giorno dopo. Lo studente triestino Rodolfo Parisi e due operai anche triestini — Francesco Sussa e Niccolò Zecchia — giacquero morti sulla strada; il primo, colpito da 22 colpi di baionetta! E le vie centrali furono insanguinate da diecine di feriti. Ai funerali delle vittime accorse una folla immensa, in mezzo alla quale furono raccolte più di 11,000 firme di cittadini chiedenti al governo austriaco lo scioglimento del battaglione territoriale. Ma invece di giustizia, i Triestini non ebbero altro che una terribile reazione poliziesca. Furono arrestati e condannati a pene gravi numerosi cittadini. L'anima di Trieste s'inasprì. Essa sentì ancóra di più il peso e l'obbrobrio del giogo austriaco.

Nell'agosto del 1868 a Gorizia scoppiava un petardo nel Duomo durante la messa che si celebrava per il compleanno dell'imperatore Francesco Giuseppe. I sospetti della polizia austriaca caddero sul cittadino Carlo Blasig, il quale fu arrestato e condannato a 6 anni di carcere. Nell'ergastolo di Gradisca, dove fu rinchiuso a scontare la pena, il Blasig incontrò Melchiorre De Pregel, suo concittadino e fratello di fede, condannato a quattro anni, e con lui riuscì a fuggire dal carcere e riparare felicemente a Udine.

Così, tra cospirazioni, dimostrazioni, persecuzioni, processi, condanne, martíri d'ogni sorta, gl'Italiani irredenti giunsero fino alla seconda metà del 1870.

Il 20 settembre di quell'anno i soldati italiani comandati dal generale Raffaele Cadorna entrarono in Roma.

In quella memorabile occasione si distinsero molto parecchi irredenti, tra i quali l'ufficiale Cristoforo Venier di Capodistria che rimase anche ferito.

A Trieste la notizia della presa di Roma fu accolta con supremo entusiasmo. Le vie della città furono immediatamente percorse dalla popolazione acclamante all'Italia. I poliziotti austriaci caricarono con le baionette inastate i dimostranti. Ma questi si riunirono novamente e reagirono contro la violenza. La sera, tutte le finestre della città furono illuminate straordinariamente. I poliziotti austriaci corsero di casa in casa a spegnere i lumi. Ma i lumi si riaccesero. La polizia austriaca allora inferocì contro il popolo. E non senza verità fu detto che quel giorno — 20 settembre 1870 — "fu sparso più sangue a Trieste che a Roma".

XII

I Triestini tra i volontari italiani di Garibaldi in difesa della Francia nella guerra del 1870 contro la Prussia. Continue dimostrazioni d'italianità nelle regioni irredente dal 1872 al 1882. Il giovane triestino Guglielmo Oberdan, studente universitario a Roma, ardente apostolo d'italianità, è impiccato a Trieste per avere attentato alla vita dell'imperatore Francesco Giuseppe. Tremende dimostrazioni italiane contro l'Austria (dicembre 1882).

Nell'autunno del 1870 Garibaldi, dimenticando il male ricevuto dai Francesi a Roma nel 1848 e nel 1866, si mise alla testa d'un corpo di volontari italiani, tra i quali i suoi due figli Menotti e Ricciotti e suo genero Stefano Canzio, e andò in Francia a difendere quella Repubblica contro la Prussia. L'Eroe vinse con cariche alla baionetta i Prussiani a Pasques, Prenois, Commarin. Poi, in tre giorni d'asprissima battaglia (21, 22, 23 gennaio 1871), li vinse a Digione, prendendo loro la bandiera del 61° reggimento fanteria:

l'unica bandiera perduta dai Prussiani nella memorabile guerra contro la Francia.

A tali battaglie presero parte il Caprin, il Dudovick e parecchi altri Triestini, per i quali Garibaldi impersonava le aspirazioni, la libertà di tutti i popoli oppressi e specialmente del popolo italiano.

La morte di Mazzini, avvenuta a Pisa il 10 marzo 1872, produsse immenso dolore nelle terre irredente. A Trieste furono diffusi manifestini listati a lutto. Il giornale *L'Operaio*, organo della locale Società Operaia presieduta da Edgardo Rascovich, per essersi fatto interprete di tanto dolore, fu sequestrato dalla polizia austriaca.

Nel 1873 Vittorio Emanuele II, recandosi a Vienna, passò per Nabresina. La polizia austriaca fermò sulla via provinciale centinaia di carrozze cariche di Triestini, i quali volevano ossequiare il "loro re": e ne arrestò un gran numero.

Nello stesso anno 1873 morì Alessandro Manzoni.[1] A Trieste ebbero luogo manifestazioni di cordoglio da parte dei cittadini e persecuzioni da parte della polizia austriaca.

Nel luglio del 1877 un comitato triestino-istriano pubblicava un proclama col quale assicurava gl'irredenti che i più intemerati patrioti d'Italia — Garibaldi, Cairoli, Avezzana, Fabrizi ed altri — tenevano fiso la sguardo sulle terre ancóra soggette agli Asburgo.

E quando a Trieste giunse la notizia che lo stesso Vittorio Emanuele II era morto il 9 gennaio 1878, i cittadini, in segno di dolore, chiusero immediatamente i negozi e i teatri. La polizia austriaca tentò di far riaprire gli uni e gli altri. Ma non vi riuscì. Allora essa strappò bandiere italiane velate di nero; sequestrò giornali; arrestò e condannò cittadini in massa. Nonostante ciò, ai funerali fatti nel Pantheon a Roma il 14 gennaio 1878 apparve una superba corona di fiori inviata dalla città di Trieste al "suo re" per mezzo d'un'apposita commissione. E il 15 gennaio 1878, per la messa funebre promossa dal regio Consolato d'Italia

[1] L'insigne poeta e letterato milanese, autore del celebre romanzo *I Promessi Sposi* tradotto in tutte le lingue. Un giorno il Manzoni, ricevendo nella propria casa la visita di Garibaldi, con le lagrime agli occhi per l'emozione, esclamava: "Questo è il più bel giorno della mia vita!" (1785–1873).

a Trieste, ebbe luogo una nuova e solenne manifestazione popolare d'italianità sotto il Consolato stesso e nelle vie principali della città; e il Consiglio comunale, su proposta del consigliere Antonio Vidacovich, levò la seduta in segno di lutto.

A Gorizia il 2 giugno 1878 fu inalberata sulla vetta del colle una grande bandiera italiana con un'invocazione unitaria. Nello stesso giorno un'altra grande bandiera italiana apparve sul colle di Montuzza a Trieste.

Nello stesso anno 1878 si recò a Trieste, per una visita, Giosuè Carducci. Fu accolto con gioia e con feste. Da tale visita il poeta trasse ispirazione alle sue odi *Saluto italico* e *Miramar*. La prima edizione del *Saluto italico*, pubblicata in un foglio volante a cura della *Giovine Trieste*, andò a ruba. Diventò subito popolare l'ultimo distico, col quale il poeta si rivolge agl'Italiani soggetti all'Austria e dice loro:

> In faccia a lo stranier, che armato accampasi
> sul vostro suol, gridate: Italia, Italia, Italia!

Furono in quell'occasione arrestati e condannati parecchi cittadini.

Il 15 ottobre 1878 Garibaldi scriveva da Caprera alla società triestina *Giovine Trieste:*

> Se oggi sento d'esser vecchio, è per essere poco valevole alla causa santa di Trieste e di Trento. Comunque, sarò superbo di potervi dare gli ultimi giorni della mia vita.

Il 19 ottobre 1878 un convegno riservatissimo a Forlì, presieduto da Aurelio Saffi e presente Edgardo Rascovich di Trieste, deliberava d'aprire arrolamenti in Italia per una spedizione liberatrice nelle terre irredente. E all'uopo iniziava la necessaria raccolta d'armi.

Nello stesso anno 1878 a Trieste furono arrestati sotto l'accusa d'alto tradimento parecchi studenti triestini, tra i quali Salvatore Barzilai.[1]

Nello stesso anno 1878 s'iniziò a Gorizia la pubblicazione d'un giornale nazionale battagliero intitolato *Il Goriziano*,

[1] Il triestino avvocato Salvatore Barzilai è da 25 anni deputato al Parlamento nazionale italiano per uno dei collegi elettorali di Roma. Fu presidente dall'Associazione della Stampa Italiana per varî anni e ministro nel Gabinetto Salandra.

il quale, pur essendo fatto bersaglio a replicati sequestri, continuò imperterrito la lotta per l'italianità. Il governo austriaco arrestò i redattori (l'architetto Antonio Tabai e Giuseppe Vinci), li sottopose a processo e li condannò al carcere. Il 15 dicembre 1878 i due condannati riuscirono a compiere un'ardita evasione e riparare a Udine.

Dalle Assise di Gratz, durante il 1878, furono anche condannati a parecchi anni di carcere i goriziani Giuseppe Ricchetti, Carlo Jamsy, Giuseppe De Mulitsch, Luigi Gregorich, Stefano Riaviz, Emilio Pogatschnig e Vincenzo Luccardi.

Nel febbraio del 1879, in séguito allo scoppio d'alcuni petardi a Gorizia, la polizia austriaca perquisì le migliori famiglie della città, arrestò Ugo Zanardi, Menotti Delfino, Attilio ed Emilio Mortera, Gustavo Fabricci, Sigismondo Stella e Alessandro Regazzini, e li condannò tutti chi a due, chi a tre anni di detenzione da scontarsi negli ergastoli di Capodistria e di Gradisca.

E quando la mattina del 3 giugno 1882 si seppe che la sera precedente era morto Giuseppe Garibaldi a Caprera, nelle città delle regioni irredente successe quello ch'era successo per la morte di Vittorio Emanuele II: grandi manifestazioni di dolore da parte dei cittadini; feroci persecuzioni da parte della polizia austriaca.

Già il 1882 fu uno degli anni più irrequieti e importanti per l'irredentismo italiano. La dipartita dell'Eroe aveva rievocato la poesia e il fáscino di giorni quanto mai gloriosi; aveva risuscitato nei vecchi e suscitato nei giovani tutto il santo entusiasmo per l'epopea garibaldina. Tanto più che correva insistente la voce d'un' alleanza tra il governo d'Italia e quello d'Austria. L'anima del popolo italiano si ribellava all'idea d'una unione con l'antica tiranna, la quale faceva ancor pesare la sua férrea catena sopra terre italiane. Unione che voleva dire, in sostanza, formale, decisiva rinunzia al riconquisto di tali terre. I più generosi patrioti non potevano rassegnarsi ad accettare le fredde e calcolatrici ragioni di Stato. Epperò le giudicavano illogiche, innaturali, mostruose.

L'Austria, del resto, poco curandosi della suscettibilità

italiana, volle festeggiare, proprio in quell'anno 1882, il quinto centenario della cosidetta "dedizione" di Trieste, quasi a sfida del sordo e continuo rumoreggiare irredentista.

Il governo austriaco promosse e organizzò per quell'occasione un' Esposizione industriale a Trieste, e ingiunse ai Triestini di parteciparvi. La cittadinanza rispose mostrandosi indifferente, ostile ai comandati festeggiamenti. Allora i rappresentanti del governo di Vienna assoldarono stranieri, li ubriacarono e, con essi, cercarono d'organizzare a Trieste, nei giorni dell'apertura dell'Esposizione, dimostrazioni favorevoli all'Impero. La stampa vendereccia avrebbe poi gonfiato tali dimostrazioni e avrebbe fatto credere all'Europa che Trieste era una città devota agli Asburgo.

Ma l'attitudine risoluta dei cittadini frustrò i tentativi degli elementi cortigiani. Per esempio: una locale società austriacante si provò d'inaugurare una bandiera donatale dalla principessa austriaca Stefania. Nel momento dell'inaugurazione, la bandiera, trafugata dai patrioti italiani, non fu più trovata. Lo scultore slavo Rendic, entrato una mattina nello studio per preparare il trasporto in piazza d'una sua statua raffigurante la "dedizione" di Trieste, trovò la statua decapitata.

La polizia austriaca arse d'ira. Prendendo le mosse dalla visita dell'arciduca austricaco Carlo Lodovico la vigilia dell'apertura dell'Esposizione, essa fece percorrere le vie di Trieste da una musica militare, seguíta da una turba di brutti ceffi croati capeggiati da una ventina d'alti funzionari governativi austriaci. Costoro si sfogarono urlando: "Abbasso l'Italia! Morte agl'Italiani! Galera, forca e piombo ai liberali!"

La provocazione era grave. Scoppiarono improvvisamente due bombe. Tre alti funzionari austriaci e una ventina d'ausiliari e spie rimasero colpiti. Alcuni d'essi espiarono con la vita, altri con lunghe sofferenze, l'insulto al sentimento d'italianità e di libertà d'un'intera popolazione.

La polizia austriaca non riuscì mai a scoprire gli autori dell'attentato. Ma si vendicò, incarcerando numerosi cittadini sospetti, tra i quali i giovani tipografi Luigi Schi-

rone, Ricciotti Gervasio e Arturo Kattenbrunner, che avevano clandestinamente stampato l'esaltazione dell'attentato. I tre furono condannati per apologia di reato. Per il medesimo reato, la polizia austriaca fece condannare anche due donne del popolo: Giulietta Krammer e Carolina Olacutti; la prima a un anno e mezzo, la seconda a due anni di carcere duro.

Il 18 agosto 1882 al nocchiero del *Lloyd austro-ungarico* Filippo Spongia di Rovigno d'Istria, la polizia austriaca di Trieste sequestrò un baule contenente una bomba all'Orsini, un petardo e proclami insurrezionali. Tutte queste cose provenivano dai Triestini esuli a Milano affiliati al *Circolo Garibaldi* di Trieste presieduto da Raimondo Battera. Si ebbero arresti e condanne.

Ma all'inaugurazione dell'Esposizione non si presentarono che i soli impiegati governativi tra folte schiere di soldati austriaci. La città vi si astenne completamente. Alla cassa dell'Esposizione non fu trovato che un solo biglietto d'ingresso "pagato"; mentre il giardino dell'Esposizione stessa fu trovato, l'indomani, tutto seminato di coccarde tricolori e di proclami italiani.

A Vienna, la fiera condotta dei Triestini urtò terribilmente i nervi dei circoli governativi. S'annunziò subito ufficialmente che nel settembre (1882) si sarebbe recato a Trieste l'imperatore Francesco Giuseppe, per rialzare con la sua augusta presenza le sorti tutt'altro che liete dell'Esposizione e per mettere un freno allo spirito ribelle dei Triestini.

In quel tempo frequentava l'Università di Roma (sezione ingegneria) il triestino Guglielmo Oberdan, giovane ventiquattrenne di bella cultura e di austere doti morali, apostolo fervente dell'irredentismo italiano, assai stimato e amato dagli altri studenti, dai professori, dai più autorevoli patrioti italiani. Era senza padre e povero. La madre era goriziana. Impartendo lezioni private ai compagni e lavorando come disegnatore presso un ingegnere di Roma, era riuscito a guadagnarsi 100 lire mensili con le quali poteva vivere "da gran signore" e mandare anche qualche cosuccia alla madre ch'egli adorava.

Quando giunse il 1882, Oberdan stava per laurearsi. Ma il fermento irredentista, le voci d'un' alleanza italo-austriaca e gli ultimi avvenimenti della sua Trieste lo distolsero dagli studi e gli misero la febbre addosso. Egli aveva detto più volte che "la causa di Trieste aveva d'uopo del sangue d'un martire triestino". La maturità dei tempi gli parve giunta. I disegni di spedizioni armate dall'Italia nelle regioni irredente — disegni rinnovati ogni anno — erano sempre falliti. Si votò lui al sacrificio. Decise cioè d'andar lui solo a promovere un moto insurrezionale a Trieste, con la speranza che avrebbe ricevuto aiuti dall'Italia.

Prima di partire, il giovane irredento andò negli uffici del *Dovere*, giornale repubblicano di Roma diretto da Felice Albani, e ivi scrisse e firmò il suo testamento politico.

Ai fratelli italiani.

Vado a compiere un atto solenne e importante. Solenne, perchè mi dispongo al sacrificio; importante, perchè darà i suoi frutti.

È necessario che atti simili scuotano dal vergognoso torpore l'animo dei giovani liberi e non liberi.

Già da troppo tempo tacciono i sentimenti generosi; già da troppo tempo si china la fronte ad ogni specie d'insulto straniero. I figli dimenticano i padri. Il nome italiano minaccia di diventare sinonimo di vile o d'indifferente.

No, non possono morire così gl'istinti generosi! Sono assopiti e si ridesteranno.

Al primo grido d'allarme correranno i giovani d'Italia; correranno coi nomi dei nostri Grandi sulle labbra a cacciare per sempre da Trento e da Trieste l'odiato straniero che da tanto tempo ci minaccia e ci opprime.

Oh potesse questo mio atto condurre l'Italia a guerra contro il nemico! Alla guerra, sola salvezza, solo argine che possa arrestare il disfacimento morale sempre crescente della gioventù nostra.

Alla guerra, giovani, finchè siamo ancóra in tempo di cancellare le vergogne della presente generazione, combattendo da leoni.

Fuori lo straniero! E vincitori, e forti ancóra del grande amore della patria *vera*, ci accingeremo a combattere altre battaglie, a vincere per la *vera* idea, per quella che ha sempre spinto gli animi forti alle cruente iniziative, per l'idea repubblicana.

Prima indipendenti, poi liberi.
Fratelli d'Italia! Vendicate Trieste e vendicatemi!
Settembre 1882.

GUGLIELMO OBERDAN.

Il giovane partì da Roma, dopo aver ricevuto dai Triestini la promessa d'un'insurrezione, d'un "vespro tergestino", per il quale si dicevano apprestati i mezzi; dopo aver ricevuto incoraggiamenti e anche promesse d'aiuti da parecchi eminenti uomini democratici d'Italia.

Giunto a Udine (15 settembre 1882), si diresse verso il confine italo-austriaco: e, sotto un cielo minaccioso (la notte precedente aveva piovuto dirottamente) e con un vento freddo, per sentieri e viottoli scoscesi malagevoli fangosi, riuscì a varcarlo. A Ronchi, paesetto del Friuli orientale, si fermò nella locanda d'un certo Giovanni Berini, e chiese una camera. Era stanco. Si gettò immediatamente sul letto e si mise a dormire. Ma lo destò un improvviso bussare alla porta. In camicia e scalzo, il giovane andò ad aprire e si vide dinanzi i gendarmi austriaci.

"Chi siete?" gli domandò il capo.

"Giovanni Rossi da Gorizia" rispose l'Oberdan, che aveva già compreso d'essere stato tradito. E, spianando la rivoltella, gridò in dialetto *O ti o mi*! e fece fuoco.

Il capo gendarme, che aveva tentato di sviare il colpo, si ebbe un dito della mano fracassato.

Il giovane fu sopraffatto dal drappello poliziesco austriaco, fu disarmato e legato strettamente. Nella valigia gli furono trovate due bombe e una fiaschetta di polvere. I gendarmi lo trascinarono in catene a Monfalcone. Quivi, all'imperiale e reale commissario austriaco, l'Oberdan ripetè di chiamarsi Giovanni Rossi fu Francesco e di Giuseppa Ciani, d'anni 25, da Trieste, studente universitario in scienze fisiche e matematiche. Disse d'avere fatto fuoco sul capo gendarme, perchè l'assisa austriaca, a lui italiano, era obbrobriosissima come quella che rappresentava un potere "che sta per forza in casa nostra". Circa le sue intenzioni, confessò ch'era diretto a Trieste per prendere parte alle feste che ivi si facevano "e per dare in qualche modo un saluto al graziosissimo sovrano". Riconobbe per

sue le bombe, la rivoltella, la fiaschetta di polvere, alcune capsule esplodenti e tutte le altre cose rinvenute nella sua valigia.

In consequenza di tali dichiarazioni, l'Oberdan fu tradotto, in mezzo a grande scorta d'Austriaci armati, a Trieste, e ivi rinchiuso nel forte di San Giusto in attesa del giudizio.

Quando giunse l'imperatore Francesco Giuseppe per visitare l'Esposizione di Trieste, la città — che appariva austriaca soltanto per le bandiere imperiali delle navi ancorate nel porto, per le insegne degli uffici governativi, per la presenza dei soldati e delle guardie con l'elmo chiodato — brillò per la sua assenza.

Chiunque si fosse in quei giorni accomunato alla vita cittadina di Trieste, avrebbe sentito ch'essa palpitava con anima italiana. Chiunque avesse ascoltato le intime voci di quell'anima, avrebbe sentito ripetere senza fine un nome: *Italia!*

Nel giorno natalizio dell'imperatore, l'Esposizione di Trieste raggiunse il massimo numero dei visitatori: duecento!

Tre mesi intanto erano passati dall'arresto dell'Oberdan. Alla fine, quale disertore[1] e quale reo d'avere voluto attentare alla vita dell'imperatore Francesco Giuseppe e alla compagine dell'impero austro-ungarico, egli fu condannato da quella corte marziale alla pena di morte mediante il capestro.

Udita la lettura della sentenza, il giovane triestino sorrise, fissò i suoi begli occhi azzurri e sereni sui giudici, e disse semplicemente: "Grazie!"

La madre, disperata, s'affrettò ad impetrare la grazia dall'imperatore. Ma le fu negata. Le fu soltanto concesso "in via eccezionale" di visitare il figlio, a patto ch'essa lo inducesse a invocare lui direttamente la grazia sovrana.

[1] Il Comune di Trieste aveva assegnato ad Oberdan giovinetto una borsa di studio di 300 corone annue, perchè egli frequentasse le scuole a Vienna e si laureasse in ingegneria. Oberdan giunse così all'età della leva militare e, come studente universitario, fu dal governo austriaco incorporato nel 22° reggimento Weber che doveva, in quell'anno 1878, reprimere i moti dei fieri montanari della Bosnia, i quali difendevano il loro diritto all'indipendenza contro l'Austria. Guglielmo, anima sensibilissima assetata di libertà e di giustizia, disertò l'esercito austriaco e riparò ad Ancona, e da Ancona a Roma.

Tentò la poveretta. Ma il figlio respinse sdegnosamente la carta che gli si presentava per la firma. E alla madre singhiozzante disse con voce dolce ma ferma: "Madre mia, sta tranquilla, io saprò essere degno di te".

Da quel momento all'infelice donna non fu più permesso di vedere il frutto delle sue viscere.

Nel frattempo, un numero infinito di telegrammi invocanti la grazia per il giovane triestino condannato a morte giungeva da ogni parte d'Europa all'imperatore Francesco Giuseppe. Telegrafarono, tra gli altri, l'insigne giurista e criminalista italiano Francesco Carrara e il poeta Giosuè Carducci. Telegrafò da Parigi Victor Hugo dicendo: "Maestà, c'è una grazia da fare. Tutto il mondo l'aspetta. La clemenza è la virtù dei re. La pena di morte è abolita per ogni uomo incivilito. La pena di morte sarà cancellata dai codici nel ventesimo secolo. Bello sarebbe praticare fin d'ora una legge dell'avvenire".[1] Telegrafarono le signore triestine con alla testa Clementina Bazzoni moglie del dottor Bazzoni podestà di Trieste. Esse, tra l'altro, dicevano a Francesco Giuseppe: "Maestà, salvate una giovine vita; risparmiate alla città di Trieste tutto l'orrore d'una esecuzione capitale".

Ma l'imperatore degli Asburgo fu irremovibile e non rispose a nessuno.

La cella nella quale stava rinchiuso Oberdan era lunga tre metri e larga due, e aveva la porta di ferro. Una cella attigua era occupata da un drappello di rozzi soldati austriaci, i quali non facevano altro che sghignazzare e insultare il condannato. Oberdan rispondeva loro cantando inni patriottici italiani.

Il 19 dicembre 1882, vigilia del supplizio, fu una giornata d'angoscia indicibile per i patrioti triestini. Le signore si accalcavano continuamente all'ufficio luogotenenziale, sperando di vedere giungere da un momento all'altro il tanto bramato telegramma di risposta concedente la grazia. Ma non giunse nulla. Giunse invece, alle ore otto di sera, col

[1] In Italia la pena di morte fu abolita in sèguito all'opera *Dei delitti e delle pene* dell'illustre penalista italiano Cesare Beccaria (1738–1794): opera che Voltaire chiamò "il vero codice dell'umanità" e che Caterina II imperatrice di Russia fece inserire per intero nel suo codice.

direttissimo proveniente da Vienna, il signor Wullenbacher boia dell'impero austro-ungarico. Egli era tutto vestito di nero, con cilindro e guanti anche neri. Aveva seco due aiutanti. Pochi seppero del suo arrivo. Dalla stazione si recò in vettura chiusa alla caserma grande, ove cenò e pernottò.

L'indomani mattina (20 dicembre 1882), alle ore sei, Guglielmo Oberdan fu vestito con l'assisa del reggimento austriaco Weber ch'egli aveva disertato; fu visitato dal medico militare Mandich e poi dal cappellano. Ma il giovane rifiutò i cosidetti conforti religiosi.

Verso le ore sette, egli fu fatto uscire dalla cella. Soffiava la borea. Faceva freddo. Nel cortile umido regnavano ancóra le tenebre lugubramente rischiarate dalla rossa luce fumosa delle lanterne dei carcerieri. Nell'oscurità brillavano le punte delle baionette dei soldati austriaci di cui era pieno tutto il cortile, e si profilava sinistramente il braccio della forca.

Oberdan fissò lo sguardo impavido sul maledetto ordigno della tirannide, e gli mosse incontro con passo sicuro. A piè di esso si tolse rapidamente la tunica militare, la buttò a terra e la calpestò con estremo disprezzo. Indi salì la scala fatale. Giunto sul palco, gridò:

"Muoio contento, perchè spero che la mia morte gioverà a riunire la mia cara Trieste alla madre patria."

Il comandante militare lo interruppe, imponendogli di tacere; ordinò ai tamburi di coprire con il loro rullo le parole audaci; ingiunse al carnefice di sbrigarsi.

Oberdan afferrò il laccio e se lo passò con le sue proprie mani al collo, gridando più forte di prima:

"Viva Trieste Italiana! Viva l'Italia!"

Il laccio assassino troncò la voce e la vita del giovane.

La tragedia era compiuta. Un nuovo nome s'era inciso infuturandosi nell'albo glorioso dei martiri del Risorgimento Italiano.

I giornali dell'impero austro-ungarico pubblicarono la notizia dell'esecuzione d'Oberdan con ogni più minuto particolare. Dissero, tra l'altro, che lo stesso boia Wullenbacher aveva dichiarato che dei molti da lui giustiziati,

nessuno aveva dimostrato la risolutezza e il coraggio del giovane triestino.

La costernazione di Trieste fu immensa. Ebbero luogo energiche proteste. I teatri rimasero deserti per tre sere di séguito, nonostante che la polizia austriaca imponesse agli attori di recitare egualmente, pena il bando. Furono sequestrati i giornali italiani che avevano commentato acerbamente l'uccisione del giovane triestino, e i redattori processati e condannati. Enrico Jurettig, per esempio, direttore dell'*Indipendente* di Trieste e già direttore dell'*Isonzo* di Gorizia, "per avere esaltato il martirio dell'Oberdan fu condannato a 18 mesi di carcere e morì durante l'espiazione della pena".

Giuseppina Oberdan, sfogando con infinito pianto il suo grandissimo dolore materno, tessè a ritessè l'elogio del figliuolo con queste commoventi parole:

Il mio Guglielmo aveva un cuore d'angelo. Era mite di costumi, studioso, d'ingegno elevato, d'animo amoroso. Quante volte mi disse carezzandomi: *Povera mamma! Tu hai fatto tanto per me, ma non dubitare; quando sarò professore di matematica, ti compenserò di tutte le tue angustie, vivremo sempre insieme e felici.* I suoi professori lo idolatravano. Era sempre il primo della sua classe. A quindici anni si guadagnava qualche denaro dando ripetizioni. Non aveva vizi. Non aveva abitudini di lusso. Era felice se, coi pochi soldi che studiosamente accumulava, poteva comprarsi qualche libro.

In Italia, l'annunzio dell'uccisione d'Oberdan produsse un'impressione enorme. Da un capo all'altro della penisola corse un possente fremito, un possente ruggito.

Carducci disse:

Guglielmo Oberdan fu impiccato questa mattina a Trieste. È austriacamente naturale.

Così l'imperatore Francesco Giuseppe s'affrettò a rispondere al poeta francese Victor Hugo e al professore italiano [1] che lo invocavano magnanimo. È, austriacamente, più che naturale. Nel sangue ingiovanì (Francesco Giuseppe), nel sangue invecchia, nel sangue speriamo che affoghi. E sia sangue suo.

L'Italia intanto è debole dentro, debolissima alla frontiera.

[1] Lo stesso Carducci, professore di belle lettere all'Università di Bologna.

Ora bisognano riforme sociali, per la giustizia; riforme economiche, per la forza; armi, armi, armi, per la sicurezza, E armi non per difendere, ma per offendere. L'Italia non si difende che offendendo. Altrimenti sarà invasa.

La gioventù italiana ci pensi. E si stanchi di far sempre accademia e schermaglia di parole noiose.

Confortiamo la memoria di Guglielmo Oberdan che si è sacrificato per colpa nostra e per noi.

E leviamo, fra dieci anni, sull'ultima cresta delle Alpi nostre, un monumento a Caio Mario [1] e a Giuseppe Garibaldi col motto: *Stranieri, indietro!*

Altrove lo stesso Carducci:

Guglielmo Oberdan andò non per uccidere, io credo, ma per essere ucciso. Egli ci getta la sua vita e ci dice: *Eccovi il pegno: Trieste è dell 'Italia.* Rispondiamo: *Guglielmo Oberdan, noi accettiamo: alla vita e alla morte. Riprendemmo Roma al Papa; riprenderemo Trieste all'Imperatore!*

E Giovanni Bovio, filosofo e moralista:

Oberdan, chiudendo il martirologio italiano, riapriva la tradizione italica. Il canape che lo strangolava, intrecciato alla nostra bandiera, indica che il nuovo diritto pubblico passerà sopra l'Austria.

E Aurelio Saffi, il più grande dei Mazziniani:

Passa, con mutabile vicenda d'egoismi e d'errori, l'onda del tempo e porta seco, condannati allo sprezzo e all'oblio, i nomi degli oppressori dei popoli; ma la memoria di Guglielmo Oberdan vivrà perenne nel cuore degl'Italiani, perchè il suo martirio rappresenta la protesta immortale della Natura contro l'arbitrio che ne infrange le leggi.

E Matteo Renato Imbriani, l'intemerato tribuno del popolo italiano:

Il suo martirio è il nuovo simbolo del patrio riscatto. Ultimo fra i martiri d'Italia per ragion cronologica, fra i primi — se intelletto di patria non falla — per alta coscienza e determinato volere.

[1] Caio Mario fu uno dei più potenti generali romani, sette volte Console, celebre specialmente per avere vinto Giugurta re di Numidia e i Teutoni (156–86 avanti Cristo).

Ed Ettore Socci, apostolo del femminismo in Italia:

La vita di Guglielmo Oberdan si compendia in amore alla madre, amore allo studio, amore alla patria. Giovani, amate, studiate e accingetevi ad affrontare la morte per la patria.

In quasi tutte le città, gli studenti e i lavoratori improvvisarono alte dimostrazioni di protesta. Al giovine martire furono votati ricordi, decretate epigrafi, delle quali rimase celebre quella dello stesso Carducci apparsa nell'atrio dell'Ateneo di Bologna:

A Guglielmo Oberdan — morto santamente per l'Italia — terrore, ammonimento, rimprovero — ai tiranni di fuori — ai vigliacchi di dentro.

Ma il governo d'Umberto I di Savoia, invece d'unirsi alla voce della nazione e salvare così, almeno in parte, la dignità italiana, fece di tutto per soffocare il grido d'indignazione di tutto un popolo.

Esso — il governo d'Umberto I di Savoia — poco dopo (1883) annunziava d'avere firmato sin dal 20 maggio 1882 il trattato d'alleanza con l'Austria: il trattato della Triplice Alleanza!

XIII

Il monumento a Dante nella città di Trento (1896). Manifestazioni d'italianità a Trieste e nell'Istria dal 1897 al 1903. Le scuole italiane elementari e medie a Gorizia, a Gradisca, a Trieste, nell'Istria e nella Dalmazia. La lampada eterna degl'Italiani irredenti sulla tomba di Dante a Ravenna (1908). Gli studenti italiani irredenti dell'Università di Vienna aggrediti dagli studenti austriaci della stessa università spalleggiati dalla polizia. Tremende dimostrazioni italiane di protesta contro l'Austria (1908). L'incessante cospirazione di Trieste italiana contro il governo austriaco sino al 1915.

L'11 ottobre 1896 s'inaugurava a Trento un monumento a Dante, fatto in séguito a pubblica sottoscrizione tra gl'Italiani delle regioni irredente.

Il monumento, opera dello scultore Zocchi, era alto metri 17.70 (la sola statua del poeta misurava metri 5 d'altezza) con una base larga metri 13. Attorno al piedistallo erano raffigurate le tre cantiche della *Divina Commedia:* l'Inferno dalla statua di Minosse; il Purgatorio dall'episodio di Sordello; il Paradiso da Beatrice fra gli angioli. L'iscrizione diceva così: "A Dante, al Padre, il Trentino — col plauso e l'aiuto della Nazione — MDCCCLXXXIX [anno in cui fu lanciata l'iniziativa del monumento] — MDCCCXCVI [anno dell'inaugurazione]".

Le feste celebrate in tale occasione dai Trentini e dagli altri Italiani, accorsi da ogni parte delle terre irredente, furono oltremodo solenni.

Trieste si rifiutò per ben 25 anni di mandare deputati a Vienna. Finalmente, nel 1897, la promulgazione della legge che estendeva il diritto di voto anche al proletariato, nonchè le sempre più gravi condizioni nazionali, consigliarono di rompere la tenace astensione e concorrere alle elezioni. Risultarono eletti plebiscitariamente i candidati liberali italiani. Nell'accettare il mandato, essi espressero subito "la riserva contro ogni e qualunque pregiudizio che si volesse far derivare dall'invio di deputati riguardo ai rapporti storico-giuridici fra Trieste e l'impero austriaco"; e nel Parlamento a Vienna fecero ripetutamente affermazioni chiarissime contro l'appartenenza di Trieste alla monarchia austro-ungarica e augúri per l'annessione di Trieste medesima al Regno d'Italia. Affermazioni ed augúri contro cui insorsero e inveirono i ministri austriaci e i deputati tedeschi e slavi e perfino i rappresentanti del socialismo austriaco.

Nello stesso anno 1897, numerosi giovani triestini e delle altre città irredente corsero ad arrolarsi nel corpo di volontari garibaldini organizzato e guidato da Ricciotti Garibaldi, secondo figlio dell'Eroe, in difesa della Grecia nella guerra contro la Turchia.

Nel 1899 Menotti Garibaldi, primo figlio dell'Eroe, andò a Trieste. Fu accolto trionfalmente dal popolo. Le solite persecuzioni da parte della polizia austriaca.

Quando nel 1900 giunse a Trieste la notizia dell'uccisione d'Umberto I, la città fu tutta in lutto. I deputati triestini e quelli della Venezia Giulia mandarono a Roma un telegramma di condoglianze. La polizia austriaca sequestrò il telegramma dei deputati, sequestrò giornali, arrestò cittadini, condannò perfino alcune signorine che in segno di lutto avevano portato nastri neri al collo o al braccio.

Nel 1901 andò Gabriele d'Annunzio a Trieste. Fu accolto con gioia e con feste. Le solite persecuzioni da parte della polizia austriaca.

Nello stesso anno 1901 cessava di vivere Giuseppe Verdi. Manifestazioni di cordoglio a Trieste e nelle altre città italiane irredente. Le solite persecuzioni da parte della polizia austriaca.

Nello stesso anno 1901 Vittorio Emanuele III si recò a Udine con la regina Elena per visitare quell'Esposizione regionale. Gl'Italiani irredenti di Trieste, dell'Istria e di Gorizia accorsero a migliaia per salutare "il loro re". Ernesto Spadoni, consigliere comunale di Trieste, sacrificando per amore della nazionalità i suoi sentimenti repubblicani, si fece presentare al re. Ci fu anche un convegno studentesco, al quale parteciparono centinaia di giovani delle terre irredente. Si parlò in esso di prossime spedizioni e di arrolamenti. E il triestino Luciano Magrini pubblicò un appello vibratissimo in cui predominava la frase *Trieste o morte!* Al ritorno, quasi 200 cittadini irredenti furono arrestati e processati.

Nello stesso anno 1901, all'annuncio della nascita di Jolanda, prima figlia di Vittorio Emanuele III, furono lanciati da Trieste 50 colombi viaggiatori, i quali volarono verso Roma per recare attraverso lo spazio gli augúri dei Triestini alla famiglia regnante d'Italia.

Nel febbraio del 1902, per protesta contro il governo austriaco che aveva messo al servizio del *Lloyd austro-ungarico* i soldati austriaci in sostituzione dei fochisti italiani in isciopero, fu proclamato lo sciopero generale, al quale aderì tutta la cittadinanza di Trieste e lo stesso municipio, onde assunse tosto — esso sciopero — carattere

politico anti-austriaco. Coi soldati crumiri si resero ben presto solidali, in odio all'elemento italiano unitario, anche le turbe campagnole ciecamente clericali e quindi austriacanti. Ci furono violente dimostrazioni e reazioni. La truppa sparò sulla folla. Quattordici cittadini furono uccisi e centinaia feriti.

Allora un gruppo di studenti triestini, tutti figli della classe operaia, e un gruppo di giovani lavoratori, italiani di fede e fervidamente unitari, decisero d'allearsi tra loro e contrapporre ai nemici dell'italianità la diffusione del pensiero di Mazzini, "associante in mirabile sintesi l'idea di giustizia sociale con l'idea d'indipendenza nazionale e di libertà politica".

La lotta ingaggiata dai due gruppi alleati fu impetuosa e vigorosa, suscitò un nuovo spirito di combattività tra gl'Italiani irredenti, abbracciò ogni manifestazione della vita pubblica. Fu fondato un giornale—*L'Emancipazione*—"organo dei mazziniani". Fu fondato dagli stessi mazziniani e dai socialisti dissidenti la Camera del Lavoro. Furono fondati circoli popolari di cultura e società sportive. Da Trieste la propaganda si diffuse ben presto nell'Istria, nel Friuli, nella Dalmazia, a Fiume. A Gorizia, per esempio, tutto il movimento operaio fu assorbito dai mazziniani e diretto intelligentemente e onestamente da Francesco Spazzapan.

Contro i mazziniani il governo austriaco rivolse naturalmente le armi della persecuzione. Nel 1903 esso arrestò e processò i membri del primo comitato mazziniano direttivo a Trieste: Riccardo De Haag, Pietro Caucich, Eugenio Fonda, Ado Grego ed Angelo Scocchi. Luciano Magrini riuscì a fuggirsene in Italia.

Poi il governo austriaco procedè ad arresti e a condanne di mazziniani in tutte le altre città irredente. Ne chiuse nelle carceri "inquisizionali e criminali" di Trieste e nelle carceri di Capodistria, Rovigno, Pola, Gorizia. Pietro Magrini di Grado, per esempio, scontò due anni nell'ergastolo di Gorizia. Luigi Duchie di Trieste scontò la condanna nella casa di pena di Capodistria; Ferruccio Kalteneisen nel castello di Lubiana; Mario Sterle nelle prigioni di Pilsen;

Giovanni Grion a Marburg. Giuseppe Vidali di Trieste fu trascinato com'un Cristo per tutte le galere dell'impero: da Pola a Rovigno, a Trieste, a Lubiana, a Klagenfurt, a Marburg.

Ma una delle questioni più scottanti, quella che sempre diede grave pensiero agl'Italiani soggetti all'Austria e allo stesso governo austriaco, fu la questione degli studî e della cultura.

Gl'Italiani irredenti non poterono mai tollerare che i loro figli fossero costretti a cibarsi, nelle scuole tedesche, della cultura teutonica tanto contrastante col loro pensiero, con le loro gloriose tradizioni intellettuali. S'adoperavano quindi da anni, con non poca fatica e non pochi sacrifici finanziari ma con grande successo, a impiantare in quasi tutte lo loro città — a Trieste, a Trento, a Pola e nelle altre minori — soggette all'Austria, scuole elementari, tecniche, ginnasiali e liceali con maestri, professori, lingua e metodi puramente italiani, mantenendole a spese dei loro municipi o delle loro associazioni come la *Lega Nazionale* e la *Dante Alighieri*.[1]

Con i contributi dunque dei municipi e delle associazioni e con i contributi di privati cittadini, s'aprirono scuole italiane dappertutto, specialmente nei paesi più minacciati dalla cultura teutonica.

La *Lega Nazionale*, quando scoppiò la grande guerra, era rappresentata a Trieste, nell'Istria, nel Friuli orientale e nella Dalmazia da circa 100 comitati. Nella sola Venezia Giulia (cioè nelle tre province di Trieste ed Istria, Gorizia, Gradisca) essa possedeva più di 60 scuole proprie, ne sussidiava 140, spendeva oltre mezzo milione di corone[2] all'anno nella sua opera di difesa scolastica.

[1] Nel 1885 fu fondata nel Trentino la società italiana *Pro Patria* che si diffuse anche nell'Istria. Nel 1890, per un saluto alla *Dante Alighieri* (la società con sede centrale in Roma che ha per iscopo la diffusione della lingua italiana e dell'italianità in tutte le parti del mondo) votato nel congresso nazionale di Trento, e per il mancato imbandieramento austriaco della città, la *Pro Patria* fu disciolta dal governo austriaco. Ma, sulle sue rovine, sorse la *Lega Nazionale*, con lo scopo di difendere e diffondere tra la gioventù irredenta la lingua e la cultura della madre patria. La *Lega Nazionale*, seguendo una politica più intelligente e prudente della *Pro Patria*, seppe reggersi e prosperare.

[2] La corona, moneta austriaca, corrisponde a £1,10 it.

La *Lega Nazionale* — così l'italiano irredento Giovanni Pattini nel suo volume *L'Italia Irredenta* — è la prima scuola che insegna, con la sua umile propaganda e le sue piccole necessità, il primo verbo della coscienza nazionale italiana. A scuola i ragazzi, dalla terza o quarta classe ginnasiale, cominciano a raccogliere denari. A 20 centesimi ciascuno per settimana, che depositano nelle mani d'un cassiere eletto fra loro stessi, aumentáti con l'introito di piccole lotterie e di piccoli balli, s'accumulano migliaia di corone all'anno. D'estate le fanciulle triestine stendono la mano ai forestieri domandando l'obolo per l'associazione che educa e fa italiani i figli del popolo: e nessuno rifiuta.

A Trieste come a Pola, a Gorizia come a Zara, a Trento come a Pisino, si fanno continuamente feste e collette, tutte in favore della *Lega Nazionale*. E il popolo accorre e profonde gioiosamente il denaro che non pagherebbe per una tassa al governo austriaco, che non darebbe come quota d'un'associazione politica.

Quando muoiono parenti o amici, invece di fiori e d'inutili parole, si fanno in loro memoria elargizioni finanziarie alla *Lega Nazionale*.

La *Lega Nazionale* ha più di 42,000 soci sugli 800,000 Italiani soggetti all'Austria. La quota è di soli 50 centesimi all'anno per ogni socio. Pure, le sue entrate, negli ultimi bilanci, hanno oltrepassato il mezzo milione di corone all'anno, appunto per il ricavato delle feste e per le elargizioni volontarie.

Così per le somme di denaro raccolte nelle città e nei villaggi delle terre irredente nelle ore di gioia e nelle ore di dolore, da quelli che amano la patria con férrea coscienza e da quelli che la sentono come un lieve sogno, sorgono le piccole scuole italiane. Sorgono nelle città della costa dalmata. Sorgono nei villaggi pietrosi dell'Istria. Piccole case quadrate bianche o gialle, isolate in mezzo a case di nemici, sopra terre ostili. Esse hanno sentito passare le folle sibilanti, urlanti, esecranti; hanno subíto la sassaiuola, l'assalto, la devastazione; ma sono rimaste sempre là ed hanno aperto tutti i giorni le loro porte ai piccoli soldati.

La *Lega Nazionale* non ha mai chiuso una scuola. Dov'essa entra, è piantato il vessillo della patria italiana. E la bandiera d'Italia non s'abbassa mai.

La *Lega Nazionale* ha attratto nelle sue scuole anime ignare con la promessa delle cognizioni, del pane e delle vesti; e le ha rimandate sáture d'ideali e pronte a sacrificare per lei le vesti, il pane, la vita.

La *Lega Nazionale* ha sorriso tra i bimbi nelle feste puerili;

ma fra i canti e le luminarie degli alberi di Natale, essa ha insegnato loro un virile patriottismo.

La *Lega Nazionale* dà denari e vesti anche e quelli che si dedicano agli studî medi e superiori, non con la noncurante carità della filantropia, ma con la severa coscienza di fare un prestito che dovrà essere pagato poi ad usura in amor di patria, in sacrifizi, in lavoro.

Così la *Lega Nazionale* delle terre italiane soggette all'Austria è diventata il simbolo della patria negata.

Ed il suo inno è cantato dalle scolaresche come un inno di guerra.

L'inno della *Lega Nazionale* — una volta tutto modificato e corretto dall'imperiale censura austriaca — fu alfine scritto dal pregiato poeta triestino Riccardo Pitteri, morto poco tempo addietro in Italia, dopo che gli fu saccheggiata e distrutta la casa dagli Austriaci.

Eccolo:

Viva Dante! Questa pura
Soavissima parola,
Cinque popoli consola
E affratella in un pensier.
Oh, ne echeggino de l'Alpi
I burroni e le foreste,
Ogni riva di Trieste,
E di Trento ogni sentier.
Lo ripetan le reliquie
D'Aquileia e di Salona,
Gli archi e i templi, ovunque sona
Dolcemente il nostro *Sì*.
Su da l'Adige al Timavo
Che in un mare affrettan l'onda,
Per le coste si diffonda,
Per le valli, i monti, il pian.
Viva Dante! questo il motto
Delle cinque genti sia,
Cui la santa poesia
Del linguaggio riunì.
Viva Dante! Cinque foglie
Giunte insieme al fior dàn vita;
Da l'union di cinque dita
Vien la forza de la man.

Ma se il problema della cultura italiana nelle province irredente era stato vittoriosamente risolto per le scuole elementari e medie che il governo austriaco, pur rodendosi, aveva dovuto finire col tollerare e legalizzare per non gettare troppa polvere sul fuoco, non era stato egualmente risolto per le università che sono il vero focolare dove si completano la cultura e l'anima d'un popolo. I giovani italiani irredenti, che avevano studiato in ginnasi e licei italiani nelle loro regioni, se non volevano terminare i loro studî in atenei tedeschi dove tutto era tedesco, perfino il linguaggio dei bidelli, dovevano andare a conseguire una laurea a Padova, a Pavia o magari a Roma, come appunto aveva fatto Guglielmo Oberdan, e sobbarcarsi così a spese enormi.[1]

Però non tutti gli studenti triestini, istriani, trentini, friulani e dalmati potevano sopportare le spese necessarie per recarsi e mantenersi agli studî in città tanto lontane dalle case loro. Essi, quindi, reclamarono l'istituzione d'un'università italiana a Trieste o almeno in un'altra città italiana delle regioni irredente. Il governo austriaco fece sempre orecchie da mercante.

Gli studenti italiani irredenti intanto, costretti dalle modeste condizioni finanziarie di famiglia a rimanere nelle università austriache, mordevano il freno. Questo loro atteggiamento urtava maledettamente i nervi degli studenti austriaci, i quali mal tolleravano recriminazioni "in casa loro".

La corda finì col diventare troppo tesa. E si spezzò la prima volta nel 1906 all'Università di Innsbruck, dove scoppiò una rissa tra studenti tedeschi e trentini. Questi ultimi, inferiori assai di numero agli avversari, furono sopraffatti. Il governo austriaco intervenne, prese in esame la cosa, o, meglio, finse di prenderla; tergiversò; menò il can per l'aia. Alfine promise di creare non già un'università (sarebbe stata troppa grazia), ma una semplice Facoltà di Diritto con sede a Trento o a Rovereto, mentre gl'Italiani irredenti preferivano Trieste. Promise, ma non mantenne la promessa. Si sforzava anzi di farla morire.

[1] Il governo austriaco dovè piegarsi a riconoscere come legali anche i titoli conseguiti dai giovani irredenti negli atenei d'Italia.

Gl'Italiani irredenti non rinunziarono per questo alla religione dei loro ideali. All'opposto: vi s'infiammarono sempre più.

Nel 1908 l'Italia pose sulla tomba di Dante a Ravenna una lampada eterna.

L'anfora vollero spontaneamente offrirla le terre italiane soggette all'Austria. Riccardo Zampieri, nel lanciare, un anno prima (23 settembre 1907), l'iniziativa da Trieste, così scriveva nel giornale triestino *L'Indipendente* da lui diretto:

> Arderà dunque sulla tomba del sommo vate d'Italia, assunto a simbolo possente d'italianità, una lampada eterna fregiata del Giglio Fiorentino e del Leone di San Marco. E la fiamma inestinguibile è destinata ad avere una significazione magnifica. Essa sarà nutrita d'olio puro. Ora l'anfora destinata ad accoglierlo, noi vorremmo che fosse offerta da Trieste. Ecco la nostra idea. *Alere flammam.* E il vaso dovrebbe essere cesellato con l'alabarda di san Sergio e con gli stemmi delle province condannate a lottare per difendere e serbare intatte le loro vestigia d'italianità.

La nobile e patriottica iniziativa ebbe un successo strepitoso, perchè non solo Trieste, ma tutte le province italiane soggette all'Austria vi concorsero con offerte popolari spontanee.

Lo stesso *Indipendente* di Trieste volle offrire il fuoco con il quale doveva essere accesa per la prima volta la simbolica fiamma. Esso fece perciò incastonare una scatola di fiammiferi della *Lega Nazionale* in un astuccio d'oro finemente cesellato con la dedica: "A suscitar la fiamma. *L'Indipendente* di Trieste".

E le due reliquie — la lampada e la scatola — furono portate a Ravenna dai migliori cittadini italiani delle regioni irredente in sacro e solenne pellegrinaggio.

Firenze — la città nativa dell'altissimo Poeta — offrì l'olio e s'obbligò di fornirlo cotidianamente in perpetuo, "affinchè la fiamma non muoia", in espiazione dell'esilio a cui essa ingiustamente condannò il più glorioso dei suoi figli.

Nello stesso anno 1908, mentre l'Austria, dopo l'annessione della Bosnia, stava per invadere la Serbia, i mazziniani di Pola diffusero manifesti tra l'esercito austriaco, incitanti gl'Italiani a non combattere contro l'indipendenza del popolo serbo. La polizia austriaca arrestò e condannò parecchi cittadini.

Nell'autunno di quello stesso anno 1908, alla riapertura delle scuole in Austria, gli studenti delle regioni italiane irredente presso l'Università di Vienna cominciarono ad agitarsi con tutti i mezzi legali ed anche per mezzo dei loro deputati al Reichsrat, per indurre una buona volta il governo austriaco a mantenere la promessa fatta circa l'istituzione d'un'università italiana o almeno d'una Facoltà universitaria a Trieste o sia pure a Trento o a Rovereto.

Ma in una delle loro adunanze nei locali della stessa Università di Vienna, gli studenti italiani (in numero appena di duecento) furono improvvisamente aggrediti da duemila studenti tedeschi armati di rivoltelle.

La mischia che s'accesse tra i due gruppi fu violenta e cruenta. Gli studenti italiani si difesero con coraggio e gagliardia mirabili. Ma furono sopraffatti dal numero degli studenti tedeschi ed anche dalla partigiana condotta della polizia viennese. E ne rimasero gravemente feriti non pochi.

Il fatto ebbe una profonda eco d'indignazione e di dolore in tutte le province italiane soggette all'Austria. S'improvvisarono dappertutto alte e minacciose dimostrazioni di protesta, alle quali parteciparono anche le donne.

L'Italia fremè e ruggì com'una leonessa a cui fossero stati maltrattati i leoncini. Dall'Alpi alla Sicilia il popolo, capitanato dagli studenti, percorse le vie delle città, imprecando, minacciando, bruciando sulle pubbliche piazze la bandiera austriaca. A Roma i dimostranti presero a sassate l'Ambasciata di Francesco Giuseppe, rompendole i vetri delle finestre. Gli studenti dell'intera nazione s'inscrissero in massa al *Tiro a Segno Nazionale*. Furono dovunque raccolte somme di denaro e spedite alla *Lega Nazionale* e alla *Dante Alighieri* delle regioni irredente. Il comitato *Pro Italia Irredenta*, in data 24 novembre 1908,

pubblicò un vibratissimo proclama incitante la nazione alla guerra contro l'Austria. Eccolo:

Fratelli italiani!

Su, su, scuotetevi dal vergognoso torpore; ritrovate l'antica vigoría e l'indomita fede. A Vienna assassinano i fratelli nostri. Un'orda di barbari, briaca d'odio e di sangue, ha aggredito nel tempio che dovrebbe esser sacro alla scienza, gli studenti nostri che domandano l'università italiana, unico baluardo per difendere il loro patrimonio intellettuale e tenére alto, come simbolo, il loro ideale.

La nuova offesa non può essere lasciata impunita. Non possono morire gl'istinti generosi della razza italiana. Già da troppo tempo si china la fronte ad ogni insulto straniero. Il patto d'odio tra genti italiche e genti austriache è risuggellato con l'aggressione codarda di Vienna, e dobbiamo sorgere contro lo straniero che offende, calpesta, assassina.

Alla politica servile e codarda del governo d'Italia, dobbiamo contrapporre la politica del popolo, senza rinunce e senza viltà.

Fratelli d'Italia, è vile chi sopporta le offese del carnefice dei propri fratelli; ma è vile anche chi dei fratelli non ode il singhiozzo e dorme.

Le parole *libertà* e *vendetta* non debbono essere strozzate dalle male arti dei governanti. Alla guerra, dunque! Il grido incitatore si solleva dalla fossa invendicata di Guglielmo Oberdan, si solleva dal tumulo di tutti i martiri della ferocia austriaca.

Su, fratelli d'Italia, alla guerra! Destatevi, levatevi concordi nella santa ira e nel santo grido. Su! L'epopea garibaldina ha bisogno di nuove fulgide pagine; l'idea, di nuovi martiri; la patria, di una riparazione.

Il governo italiano si limitò a fare le sue diplomatiche rimostranze al governo austriaco. Questo, a sua volta, finse di commoversi e promise ancóra una volta l'istituzione della invocata Facoltà giuridica italiana in una delle città irredente. Ma si trattò, come al solito, d'una semplice promessa austriaca non mai mantenuta.

Esso, invece — il governo austriaco — seppe bene mantenersi coerente a sè stesso, riprendendo le canagliesche persecuzioni contro i principali agitatori irredentisti. Subito dopo (1909), per esempio, inscenò un processo clamoroso a carico dei 24 dirigenti il movimento mazziniano nella

regione Giulia. Il giornale *L'Emancipazione* di Trieste dovè sospendere le sue pubblicazioni, perchè i redattori, i collaboratori, i corrispondenti furono tutti rinchiusi in carcere.

Ma le persecuzioni, i processi, le condanne non riuscirono a spegnere il naturale sentimento d'italianità delle regioni irredente.

Furono a Trieste, la città sintetizzante le dette regioni — così il sunnominato Attilio Tamaro in un suo scritto pubblicato nel marzo-aprile del 1915 — due società borghesi distinte: una ufficiale, l'altra italiana, che non s'incontrarono mai, neppure su un terreno neutrale. Nulla valse a smovere i Triestini dal loro atteggiamento d'odio. Inutili furono le offerte di benefici materiali, di leggi e di concessioni favorevoli fatte loro dai governanti austriaci. Somma fu l'indifferenza per tutto ciò che era austriaco. Direttori di giornali, autorità comunali, maestri di scuola dimostrarono sempre di non conoscere neanche i nomi dei primi ministri dell'impero austriaco. Mai fu nominato in un atto comunale o in un giornale cittadino l'imperatore d'Austria col pronome *nostro*.

I Triestini non vollero mai un governo austriaco liberale o amico; ma vollero sempre, soltanto e fortemente, che il governo austriaco se ne andasse da casa loro. Quali nomi e quali fatti bisogna ricordare dei tempi più recenti? Felice Venezian, che nel Consiglio comunale predisse il giorno in cui anche i Triestini avrebbero dato di piglio alle loro italiche campane?[1] Ernesto Spadoni, il quale nello stesso Consiglio comunale di Trieste espresse l'augurio *che un raggio della stella che brilla sul Tevere irradi l'orizzonte delle nostre province irredente*? Il grido di *Viva l'Italia!* risuonato mille e mille volte a Trieste contro il governo austriaco? O l'inno di Garibaldi cantato centinaia di volte sotto la Luogotenenza austriaca fra guardie imperversanti con ogni violenza? O la festa del centenario verdiano nel 1913, quando, avendo la polizia austriaca proibito che un coro cantasse nella piazza grande di Trieste il divino *Va pensiero su l'ali dorate* del *Nabucco*, si trovarono sulla piazza stessa, nell'ora indicata per il concerto, più di 30,000 persone che lo cantarono, sostituendo all'esigua voce del coro

[1] L'imperatore Carlo VIII, disceso in Italia verso la fine del Quattrocento, pretendeva la signoria di Firenze. Piero Capponi, gonfaloniere della città, fu incaricato con altri tre deputati di trattare col pretendente. Ma costui voleva imporre inique condizioni. Il Capponi, allora, stracciò la carta contenente siffatte condizioni, e gridò fieramente allo straniero: "Voi suonerete le vostre trombe, noi suoneremo le nostre campane!"

In sèguito a tale atto, Carlo VIII credè prudente cambiare attitudine e proporre moderate condizioni a Firenze.

quella immensa e possente dell'anima cittadina? Dobbiamo ricordare i giovani triestini che inalzarono la bandiera italiana sul municipio, o dipinsero coi tre colori italiani perfino i muri degli uffici di polizia? O dobbiamo ricordare il vecchio patriota triestino Lorenzetti, il quale, prima di morire pochi mesi addietro, disse ai suoi parenti che *quel giorno* andassero a picchiare sulla sua tomba per avvertirlo che l'Italia *era finalmente arrivata a Trieste*? Dobbiamo ricordare il triestino Gino Mauro, spentosi anch'egli poco tempo addietro, il quale sul letto di morte, piangendo, supplicava il medico di tenerlo in vita soltanto fino al giorno della libertà di Trieste?

Fu talmente generale e profondo l'odio contro l'Austria, che i Triestini vissero sempre appartati dagli Austriaci, ed era reputato universalmente disonore per un Italiano irredento avere invitato a casa sua un ufficiale austriaco, o per una donna italiana irredenta fare all'amore con uno di tali ufficiali.

Non è mai riuscita al governo austriaco una festa imperiale a Trieste. Il popolo fu assente perfino da quelle che potevano sembrare feste di lavoratori, cioè dai vari delle navi da guerra. Non s'è istituita una banda municipale nella città, solo per non costringerla a suonare nelle occasioni ufficiali austriache. Non v' è piazza o via triestina che sieno macchiate con un nome austriaco. Molto accorgimento e coraggio ci vollero per evitare che il Corso fosse chiamato col nome dell'imperatore Francesco Giuseppe, mentre fu arditamente intitolata a Carducci la via che passa dinanzi alla caserma dove fu ucciso Oberdan.

Nelle sventure nazionali i Triestini furono pari a tutti gli altri Italiani nel raccogliere soccorsi. Il partito nazionale riuscì perfino a commemorare, quasi ogni anno, con pubbliche manifestazioni, la morte d'Oberdan. E come sia riuscito a far ciò, non si può ancóra dire.

Sia che lottasse, sia che si divertisse, quando chiedeva diritti o quando organizzava feste sportive, quando pregava e quando minacciava, negli ambienti più disparati, nelle sue innumerevoli associazioni, nei suoi grandi caffè, nelle sue biblioteche, nelle sue scuole, Trieste, col suo atteggiamento italiano fermo ed ostinato, costituì un'incessante e generale cospirazione contro il governo austriaco.

Così essa attese la libertà. Così se ne resa degna.

XIV

Proclama incitante l'Italia alla guerra contro l'Austria, indirizzato dai Triestini a ciascun deputato del Parlamento nazionale italiano, fuorchè ai socialisti, il giorno in cui s'aprì a Roma, nel febbraio del 1914, la nuova legislatura.

Onorevole Signore,

Trieste, la città d'Italia ancóra soggetta al dominio straniero, nel giorno in cui si riapre il Parlamento nazionale italiano, si rivolge alla Signoria Vostra fraternamente con un monito e un augurio.

Con un monito, giacchè si rivolge a Vostra Signoria pregandola di voler pensare e ricordare:

— che il governo straniero, padrone di Trieste, fa ogni sforzo per slavizzare la città che la geografia, la storia e il diritto, oltrechè la nazionalità e la volontà dei cittadini, consacrano città d'Italia;

— che l'Austria, poichè slavizza Trieste e la Venezia Giulia, non costituisce più un argine contro lo slavismo, ma porta gli Slavi entro i confini d'Italia;

— che Trieste è ormai una città d'Italia governata con leggi tedesche amministrate da Slavi, perchè tutti i dicasteri dello Stato sono in mano degli Slavi;

— che il governo austriaco, con la slavizzazione della Venezia Giulia e di Trieste, tende, oltrechè a far perdere ad esse il diritto e alla Nazione italiana il dovere del riscatto, anche a *balcanizzare* quelle terre, e sopra tutte Trieste, per concentrare su di esse e staccare dai porti del Regno d'Italia il commercio e la politica dei paesi balcanici occidentali;

— che la resistenza dell'Istria e di Gorizia è ridotta agli estremi, e che Trieste, per le condizioni dei suoi contrafforti e per la forza dell'invasione, pur combattendo con fede, con amore, con sacrificio, è ridotta alle ultime risorse della difesa nazionale;

— che la ricchezza che dà a Trieste la sua posizione geografica, essendo la città una città d'Italia, è ricchezza nazionale sfruttata dallo straniero;

— che Trieste, riunita per forza del diritto nazionale alla Patria, apporterà a questa il dominio sicuro di tutti i commerci balcanici e uno dei più possenti mezzi per la risoluzione del pro-

blema mediterraneo col possesso delle grandi linee che Trieste ha ed avrà sempre imprescindibilmente con la Grecia e col Levante.

Per questi fatti principali, fidenti che la Signoria Vostra vorrà fraternamente meditarli, considerando quale immensa somma di interessi nazionali contenga il problema dell'indipendenza nazionale di Trieste, i Triestini augurano a Vostra Signoria, per l'onore suo e per l'onore della Nazione italiana, che Ella voglia contribuire a disciplinare le forze nazionali verso il compimento definitivo dell'Unità nazionale; che Ella voglia cooperare ad effettuare che all'attuale legislatura sia riservato l'altissimo onore di poter proclamare ricostituita l'Italia entro i confini naturali; che Ella possa dire un giorno con orgoglio di avere contribuito con la sua opera e col suo voto a risolvere il grande problema della libertà e dell'italianità dell'Adriatico.

Se il tempo della remissività è passato, si possa trovare nel Parlamento della nuova Italia chi affermi il diritto della Nazione al possesso della sua Trieste, come nel 1861 s'è affermato il diritto su Roma!

Trieste, febbraio 1914.

XV

Proclama incitante l'Italia alla guerra contro l'Austria, indirizzato dai Triestini a ciascun deputato socialista del Parlamento nazionale italiano il giorno in cui s'aprì a Roma, nel febbraio del 1914, la nuova legislatura.

Onorevole Signore,

Trieste, la città d'Italia ancóra soggetta allo straniero, nel giorno in cui si riapre il Parlamento nazionale a Roma, si rivolge fraternamente alla Signoria Vostra e, mentre sull'attuale momento della lotta nazionale da chi è interessato a negare la verità si diffondono menzogne, mentre di più non è improbabile che per naturale conseguenza degli avvenimenti la lotta nazionale della Venezia Giulia e di Trieste entri nell'ámbito del Parlamento italiano, prega la Signoria Vostra di voler meditare i seguenti inoppugnabili fatti:

— che la geografia, la storia, il diritto, oltrechè la volontà e la nazionalità della grandissima maggioranza dei cittadini, dichiarano che Trieste è città italiana, è città d'Italia;

— che il governo austriaco e gli Slavi fanno un enorme

sforzo per snaturare l'italianità di Trieste, intensificando l'immigrazione ed esigendo l'equiparazione degli immigrati stranieri agl'italiani;

— che Trieste è ormai una città d'Italia governata con leggi tedesche amministrate da Slavi, perchè tutti i dicasteri dello Stato sono in mano degli Slavi;

— che gli Slavi combattono la lotta nazionale in masse compatte, composte in minima parte di borghesi, in massima di proletari;

— che l'invasione naturale degli Slavi (urbanesimo) è dovuta al fatto che la città appartiene all'Austria, perchè se, reintegrata nei suoi diritti nazionali, essa facesse parte dello Stato italiano, il suo grande mercato di lavoro sarebbe aperto soltanto ai lavoratori italiani;

— che l'invasione artificiale, compiuta in grandi proporzioni, e, in genere, la slavizzazione di Trieste e della Venezia Giulia sono volute dal governo austriaco, che vuole far perdere a queste terre il diritto e all'Italia il dovere del riscatto nazionale e, oltre a ciò, *balcanizzare* Trieste per concentrare in essa politicamente e commercialmente i Balcani occidentali;

— che la pace fra le nazioni è impossibile, perchè non si possono delimitare i confini del possesso di ciascuna nazione, perchè la lotta nazionale è un fatto di storia naturale epperò imprescindibile, perchè alle spalle degli Slavi già immigrati premono milioni di Sloveni e di Croati che tendono alla conquista dell'Adriatico;

— che se avesse dovuto valere in altri tempi la tesi di equiparazione che si vuol far valere oggi per Trieste, cioè che gli Slavi, poichè sono immigrati, hanno il diritto di snaturare la città italiana, l'Italia sarebbe ancóra serva dello straniero;

— che non sono possibili altre soluzioni della lotta nazionale se non queste: o la sconfitta dell'Italianità, o l'unione politica con lo Stato nazionale a cui per ragioni ideali, culturali e morali Trieste già appartiene;

— che l'irredentismo si sintetizza e si esprime in un concetto che non può non essere sacro ad ogni uomo: Libertà!

— che un irredentismo slavo, ricongiunta Trieste con la nazione per il compimento definitivo dell'unità italiana, o non esisterebbe, come non esiste un irredentismo italiano a Nizza, o sarebbe assurdo, come sarebbe un irredentismo degl'Italiani di Marsiglia.

Per questi fatti principali, fidenti che la Signoria Vostra vorrà prenderli in considerazione, fidenti che la Signoria Vostra domandandosi che cosa avrebbe fatto se fosse stato cittadino di Milano

prima del 1859 o di Venezia prima del 1866 si risponderà che avrebbe combattuto per l'indipendenza nazionale contro il governo straniero, i Triestini Le augurano, per l'onore suo e per quello della Nazione, che Ella possa dire un giorno con orgoglio di aver con la sua opera e col suo voto cooperato alla libertà dell'ultima grande città d'Italia che è ancóra soggetta allo straniero.

Trieste, febbraio 1914.

XVI

Proclama incitante l'Italia alla guerra contro l'Austria, lanciato dagl'Italiani delle province irredente di Gradisca, Gorizia, Trieste e Istria (Venezia Giulia) e del Trentino durante il mese d'aprile del 1914 "per l'unità della Patria".[1]

Le *Porte d'Italia* (la Venezia Giulia e il Trentino) sono le terre nostre che l'Austria ha saputo tenere sotto il suo dominio con l'intento di avere sempre i suoi piedi in Italia per gli effetti della sua politica adriatica e per dare all'Italia una sensazione di perpetua inferiorità militare con la sua prepotente incombenza sui confini.

Le *Porte d'Italia* sono le terre nostre, la Venezia Giulia sopra tutte, poichè essa ha i due grandi valichi del Predil e delle Porte di ferro al Nevoso e quello Massimo di Monte Re per i quali sono sempre entrati i barbari in Italia, dal primo secolo avanti Cristo in poi; per i quali l'Austria può oggi facilmente riversare un esercito in Italia.

Sono terre d'Italia le nostre, poichè tali si sono dichiarate sempre e tali sono state sempre anche ufficialmente riconosciute. E sono terre d'Italia da quando esiste l'Italia: *fisicamente*, perchè le Alpi Giulie costituiscono con indiscutibile evidenza i confini naturali del Paese; *politicamente*, perchè sono regioni italiche dal tempo in cui Roma costituì l'Italia; *moralmente*, perchè sono state in ogni tempo tributarie dei loro ingegni, della loro volontà, della loro fede, non meno delle altre province d'Italia, alla grandezza della Nazione.

Orbene, queste terre d'Italia, che dal loro seno fecondato dal sangue degli innumerevoli figli che da Aquileia ad Albona difesero

[1] Questo proclama doveva far parte d'un *Numero Unico* che non fu poi stampato. Esso — il proclama — fu invece diffuso segretamente a Trieste e pubblicato nella *Voce della Patria* del 4 aprile 1914.

i confini d'Italia contro i barbari, e che producono uomini nei quali la difesa nazionale costituisce la più possente ragione di vita, queste terre d'Italia, dicevamo, sono le sole che non obbediscano a leggi italiane, che non siano rette da un governo italiano, che non abbiano in cima della loro vita italiana il Re d'Italia. Mentre tutte le altre province italiane sono state liberate dai domíni stranieri o da quelli anti-unitari, la Venezia Giulia e il Trentino sono le sole terre che si trovano fuori dell'unità nazionale, che sono ancóra soggette al dominio straniero, anzi a quel governo austriaco che tentò di assassinare l'Italia, che per tenerla in servitù e per distruggere il suo sogno, il suo ideale, la sua volontà che si glorificavano nella parola *libertà*, mandò soldati fanatici e feroci, alzò forche in tutte le città, insanguinò tutti i campi, empì tutte le carceri, bastonò, incatenò, rubò, saccheggiò, impiccò, fucilò dovunque sentì palpitare anime italiane in un'ardente brama di libertà. La Venezia Giulia e il Trentino sono le ultime, le sole terre d'Italia che soggiacciono ancóra e servono, legate con un regime di violenza a siffatto governo austriaco.

È giusto?

È giusto che, mentre tutti gli altri Italiani, entro i naturali confini d'Italia, vivono in libertà, si chiamano *cittadini italiani* e si governano con leggi e governi italiani, noi Italiani della Venezia Giulia e del Trentino, noi soli dobbiamo essere soggetti a un dominio straniero e anti-italiano, noi soli dobbiamo essere chiamati *sudditi austriaci*, noi soli dobbiamo essere governati da leggi tedesche e da governi slavo-tedeschi? Se siamo Italiani, perchè dobbiamo ubbidire a leggi tedesche e ad impiegati slavi?

Non è chi non veda l'iniquità della nostra condizione; non è chi non veda la miseria morale che ci soffoca ogni giorno più, sotto il tirannico governo straniero, mentre gli altri Italiani, nel regime della libertà nazionale, sono invece portati a sempre più nobile e più superba ascensione dalle rinnovate energie, dal possente spirito della nazione.

Ma a noi Italiani della Venezia Giulia e del Trentino non tocca solo la sventura d' essere i soli Italiani d'Italia non uniti ancóra al Regno nazionale; a noi Italiani del Goriziano, Italiani di Trieste, Italiani dell'Istria, tocca anche la sventura di vedere le nostre belle città invase dagli Slavi. Calano a torme, calano a branchi per le aperte vie delle Alpi, calano per moto naturale, avvinti dal mare e dalle città promettenti ricchezza, calano per tradimento di alcuni dei nostri (oh, sono ben pochi!), ma calano, in masse maggiori, ordinati come mandre che si pórtino sui grassi pascoli del

piano, per volontà del governo austriaco, del governo che essendo straniero, per rendere discutibile con una parvenza di giustizia l'indiscutibile iniquità che è nel dominio straniero, e per cingerci di nemici soffocanti i nostri gridi di libertà, tende con enormi sforzi a snazionalizzare le nostre terre, le ultime terre d'Italia rimaste in suo potere.

Da ogni parte, in ogni parte distendono le loro forze gli Slavi: son più di 40,000 nel comune di Trieste, sono 10,000 a Gorizia, sono 10,000 a Pola. Pirano li sente insultare la sua storia alle sue porte. Parenzo li vede pullulare nelle sue campagne. Montona e Albona sono ridotte alle estreme disperate difese dei loro municipi. Pinguente, Pisino, Rozzo, strette ciascuna con unanime meravigliosa concordia in una sola volontà italiana, sono comandate e tormentate dagli Slavi delle campagne che hanno arraffato — protetti da leggi inique — i loro municipi. Contro ogni città, contro ogni borgo risuonano l'insulto e la sfida, e dovunque dà il tono il governo austriaco. Accanto all'avversario che con tutte le armi più potenti della banca e dello Stato invade le terre nostre, snatura il loro carattere storico e naturale e violenta tutti i diritti col diritto del più forte allo scopo di "balcanizzarle", gli avversari interni dell'integrità nazionale — i socialisti — fedeli all'idea dello Stato austriaco e imprescindibilmente bisognosi dell'aiuto degli Slavi per le lotte elettorali, deridono e ingiuriano quelli che indicano l'invasione slava, quelli che proclamano la necessità della difesa, quelli che invocano la libertà, l'indipendenza.

Nella lotta contro i due avversari, la forza íntima della nostra gente si rinsalda, la compagine diventa granitica, l'animo si fa ardente, le energie vibrano con impeto, mentre il segreto della razza italiana, il segreto che ha salvato tutto il resto d'Italia dai barbari, salva l'italianità nostra ancóra per alcun tempo dalla definitiva contaminazione, dalla distruzione della sua forza politica, dalla sorte avuta dalla Dalmazia. Combatteremo ancóra incessantemente, per tutte le rappresentanze, per tutte le istituzioni; qua vinceremo, là perderemo; ma la difesa nazionale sarà sempre strenua e instancabile.

Però non basta!

Al di là della difesa nazionale contro gli Slavi e al disopra di questa, devono stare la lotta per la libertà, la lotta per l'indipendenza nazionale a cui abbiamo quello stesso diritto che ha avuto tutto il resto d'Italia, *la lotta per il compimento definitivo dell'Unità italiana.*

Per questo ideale, che deve tramutarsi nella più concreta

realtà, dobbiamo agire tutti con maggiori vedute, con maggiore impeto che per la difesa nazionale. E sopratutto con fede. Ma non con una fede generica rivolta con santa pazienza ad un incerto e fumoso avvenire, sì bene con una chiara e precisa fede materiata di fatti e agente come molla che potentemente sospinga ai fatti.

Dobbiamo agire tutti, giovani e uomini maturi, ciascuno col suo cómpito. I giovani debbono fare della loro giovinezza una milizia e devono agire e agitare per far bene intendere a tutta l'Italia, al governo nazionale e al governo austriaco che vogliamo la libertà, che vogliamo la liberazione, che l'Italia non è ancóra compiuta. E gli uomini maturi, specie quelli a cui i cittadini o le istituzioni hanno dato un carattere rappresentativo, debbono con la loro autorità fare intendere e far valere i diritti unitari delle città e dei cittadini che rappresentano.

Tutti dobbiamo agire, tenacemente, fortemente.

E si moltiplichino a mille con giusto patriottismo i cooperatori nostri nel Regno, con risoluta volontà di mettere fine alle nostre miserie, con immutabile fede nell'attuazione dei diritti nazionali. Bisogna scuotere il governo, i deputati, il popolo; bisogna vincere le indifferenze e i vacui sentimentalismi, le diffidenze e le ironie, le renitenze e le vigliaccherie, le ipocrisie della diplomazia e dei politicanti e le imbecillaggini dei demagoghi. Fa d'uopo, sia pure con un'agitazione violenta, imporre alla coscienza italiana il problema dell'unità italiana; fa d'uopo imporre con qualunque mezzo, con qualunque sacrificio, il problema nostro all'attenzione dell'Europa, e imporlo con tutto il suo contenuto di giustizia.

E possiamo far ciò oggi con fede più sicura, con più serena coscienza della nostra responsabilità, poichè oggi il problema della nostra libertà si sintetizza nel nome di Trieste con una grande importanza, non solo rispetto al diritto che abbiamo all'indipendenza, ma anche per la politica internazionale del Regno. Trieste è oggi per l'Italia la chiave dell'Oriente. A Trieste la storia ha trasmesso per tutta l'Italia la dominazione commerciale dei mari orientali che è stata di Venezia in altre epoche. Il possesso di Trieste vuol dire garanzia di pace con l'attuale Stato di confine, garanzia di difesa poderosa e sicura contro gli Stati slavi di domani, vuol dire assoluta garanzia di libertà alle spalle per ogni eventuale conflitto con altri nemici.

Quindi, oggi, combattere per la libertà nostra, vuol dire insegnare all'Italia quale somma d'interessi nazionali si risolva nell'Adriatico orientale, vuol dire aiutare l'Italia ad aprirsi le vie del-

l'Oriente, vuol dire spingere l'Italia a prendere una più salda e più sicura posizione di fronte o accanto alle altre Potenze.

Non si combatte dunque soltanto per un ideale di libertà regionale, ma per la grandezza d'Italia, per una più vasta ricchezza, per un più superbo avvenire della Nazione.

L'agitazione unitaria intensa, violenta, tenace provocherà il governo austriaco a repressioni e ad un più largo favoreggiamento degli Slavi? Anzitutto è da domandarsi se le nostre condizioni possano essere peggiori di quanto sono. Ma poi dobbiamo ricordare l'indiscutibile verità che tutte le repressioni e tutti i favoreggiamenti non faranno che imporre sempre più efficacemente il problema nostro alla Nazione e all'Europa.

All'opera, dunque, tutti, ciascuno col suo cómpito!

I tempi incalzano. Il turbine irredentistico e le gravissime lotte interne scuotono, squassano le fondamenta dell'impero austriaco. Il problema dell'Austria è posto in discussione dinanzi a un'Europa che ha esaltato in questi ultimi tempi il principio di nazionalità.

È tempo che noi agiamo con tutte le nostre forze, per immettere il nostro diritto nell'ingranaggio diplomatico che prepara il domani, per far sì che l'Italia non sia assente coi suoi diritti, coi suoi interessi dalla discussione internazionale del problema austriaco.

All'opera tutti, e nel cuore una sola volontà. *Viva l'Italia!*

XVII

La bandiera italiana issata a Trieste sul campanile di San Giusto e sull'antenna del porto di Muggia nel mese di dicembre del 1914. Migliaia di Italiani irredenti corrono ad offrire il loro sangue alla madre patria nella grande guerra contro l'Austria (1914–1915).

Lo scoppio della grande guerra (fine di luglio 1914), provocato dall'*ultimatum* dell'Austria alla Serbia, riaccese le speranze anche dei più sfiduciati Italiani irredenti nella liberazione delle terre sintetizzate dal binomio Trento e Trieste.

Nel settembre e nell'ottobre del 1914 — così il triestino Angelo Scocchi — Trieste, specialmente, fremeva d'azione. Un moto rivoluzionario contro l'Austria pareva imminente. Prima d'in-

coraggiarlo, i patrioti vollero sapere quale eco esso avrebbe avuto in Italia. I Triestini furono scongiurati a non moversi, a non affrettare un avvenimento che doveva compiersi ineluttabilmente, a non compromettere le sorti dell'Italia, a non trascinare la nazione in un intervento immaturo.

Nonostante ciò, all'alba del 1° dicembre 1914 una grande bandiera italiana sventolava a Trieste sul campanile di San Giusto e un'altra sull'antenna del porto di Muggia.

Il 2 dicembre 1914 Trieste era piena di manifestini incitanti il popolo a rifiutare l'obolo alla Croce Rossa austriaca. Furono arrestati parecchi cittadini, tra i quali il mazziniano Marcello Vidali che fu prima internato nel castello di Lubiana e poi nel carcere di Marburg. Molti furono imbrancati nell'esercito austriaco. I più finirono prigionieri volontari dei Russi e dei Serbi. Altri lasciarono la giovine esistenza in Galizia e in Bosnia con un'ultima invocazione all'Italia lontana.

Ma parecchie migliaia, sfidando il rigore del governo austriaco e ogni altra sorta di pericoli, riuscirono, tra la fine del 1914 e i primi mesi del 1915, a varcare i confini e spargersi nell'Italia Settentrionale e a Roma, dove offrirono entusiasticamente il loro sangue per la liberazione delle terre ancóra soggette alla schiavitù austriaca e per l'unione di esse alla madre patria.

XVIII

Gabriele d'Annunzio riafferma ed esalta l'italianità di Trieste nei giardini del Palagio di Andrea Doria in Genova (6 maggio 1915), ricevendo in dono il gesso del Leone Tergestino che è murato in una casa dei Giustiniani.

Brevi parole dirò, tanta è qui l'eloquenza delle memorie, delle cose, dei segni, tanto è grave di destino questo dono che io ricevo con cuore tremante, come se in me, per grazia d'una fedeltà senza fallo, a più degnamente riceverlo, entrasse l'ansia di quella (Trieste) che laggiù soffre la fame del corpo, soffre la fame dell'anima, violata, straziata, calcata con ferocia ogni giorno più maledetta.

La sentiamo qui in presenza vera. È davanti a noi, come quell'urna scolpita, come quelle statue. È diritta davanti a noi,

con tutte le sue piaghe aperte, con tutte le sue lividure, con le tracce di tutte le ingiurie, come il Paziente alla Colonna.

Ah, veramente, noi cominciamo a vergognarci di tanto parlare. E intendiamo il rude bisticcio di quell'uno dei Mille, grandissimo animo in piccolo corpo, il quale ier sera gridò nel convito, con la sua voce di assalto: *Meglio che la parola, io vorrei riprendere il fucile, o compagni.*

Motto garibaldino, ben detto e bene udito in Genova.

Non questo gesso che io custodirò piamente, ma il Leone di pietra istriana, tratto dal glorioso muro in un altro giorno di sagra marina, Genova rimanderà per mare a Trieste: restituzione magnifica.

Passi la nave in vista della Caprera [1], che forse s'empirà di ruggito ripercosso dalle rocce. E navighi all'Adriatico. E il morto figlio di Lamba sepolto nelle acque trionfate, e Luciano d'Oria davanti a Pola, e Gasparo Spinola davanti a Trieste, e gli altri terribili vostri riapparianno in epifania d'amore commisti ai vendicati di Lissa, luminosissimamente.

E il Leone di San Marco, recato nell'Adriatico da nave di Genova, significherà per gli Italiani: *Questo mare profondo, ove la cresta di ogni flutto è fiore di nostra gloria, si chiama, di nuovo e per sempre, nei linguaggi di tutte le nazioni il* Golfo di Venezia.

XIX

Parole dette da Gabriele d'Annunzio in Genova il 7 maggio 1915 agli Esuli Dalmati, ricevendo in dono il Libro che afferma, dimostra e propugna l'italianità della Dalmazia, stampato in Genova.

Questo libro d'amore, di fede e di rampogna un Italiano dovrebbe oggi riceverlo in ginocchio umiliato, in atto di chiedere il perdóno e di fare l'ammenda. A me rimanere in piedi davanti a voi, reverente ma non vergognoso, è consentito dalla coscienza di non aver mai dimenticata quella che Antonio Baiamonti, il *podestà mirabile* di Spálato, chiamò *figlia minore d'Italia*, quella che *seconda Italia* chiamò il dantesco Tommaséo. Ma l'Iddio degli eserciti mi conceda di potermi inginocchiare, in uno dei giorni

[1] Caprera, l'isoletta presso le coste della Sardegna, divenuta celebre perchè fu il soggiorno prediletto di Garibaldi e perchè l'Eroe vi morì e vi fu sepolto.

prossimi, dinanzi a quell'uno dei vostri altari sotto la cui tavola i padri lacrimando riposero il ripiegato gonfalone repubblicano di San Marco.

Se in Genova io nomino Sebenico, Zara, Traù, sobbalzano nel sepolcro di San Matteo le ossa di Luciano d'Oria, che seppero il sale dell'Adriatico. La sua vittoria e la sua morte si commemorano alla stessa data che ci adunò sul lido di Quarto[1]: il cinque maggio. Veggo le città dalmate insanguinate e affocate, prima che il ferro di Donato Zeno finisca sul ponte l'ammiraglio ancóra urlante dalla bocca squarciata: *San Zorzo! San Zorzo!*

Ma un'altra visione mi viene da un'altra vittoria inscritta fra le liste bianche e nere del tempio navale. È come un'allegoria della nostra lunga cecità. Nelle acque di Curzola, Lamba Doria, avendo disposte le sue galee sopra vento, con polvere di calce viva bruciò gli occhi dei Veneziani condotti dal Dandolo; e sgominò quei disperati ciechi.

Mi sembra che da una simile cecità ostile siamo noi rimasti afflitti, dopo la sciagura di Lissa. Non abbiamo veduto, non abbiamo voluto vedere quel che i vincitori operavano, senza tregua, senza misericordia, per cancellare ogni vestigio del nostro dominio su la costa orientale, per distruggere ogni traccia d'italianità su la bella spiaggia latina non consacrata soltanto dal sangue ma dallo spirito, non conquistata soltanto dalle armi ma dalle arti, non soltanto nostra per antica signoria ma per sempre novo pensiero, non soltanto ricca di reliquie mute ma di cultura eloquente. Noi abbiamo lasciato compiere su voi, per anni e per anni, le più inique persecuzioni, o fratelli nostri magnanimi che opponeste alla minaccia il coraggio, all'ingiustizia la pazienza, la maschia gentilezza alla stupida atrocità. Noi non abbiamo osato aiutare nè confortare la triste e taciturna lotta proseguita da voi, o fedeli di Roma, per custodire la benedetta lingua d'Italia, per difendere i documenti dell'alta origine, per serbarvi contro tutti e contro tutto italiani. Come i marinai del Dandolo, noi abbiamo distolto dalla battaglia i nostri occhi dolorosi!

Chiediamo perdóno, facciamo ammenda. I nostri occhi alfine si riaprono, sanâti dal vento salutifero che soffia su tanta strage, su tanta virtù, su tanto orrore, su tanto amore. Di rimorso e di pietà dovremmo piangere, o fratelli; ma non piangiamo, sì bene guardiamo fermamente il destino.

[1] A Quarto, il 5 maggio 1915, fu inaugurato un monumento ai *Mille*. D'Annunzio vi pronunziò il discorso commemorativo.

Questo libro, che voi ponete nelle mie mani, è un atto di possesso. È breve, e pure ha grande peso. Ci significa, chiaro e conciso, nello stile di Roma, che la Dalmazia appartiene all'Italia per diritto divino ed umano; per la grazia di Dio il qual foggia le figure terrestri in tal modo che ciascuna stirpe vi riconosca scolpitamente la sorte sua; per la volontà dell'uomo che moltiplica la bellezza delle rive inalzandovi i monumenti delle sue glorie e intagliandovi i segni delle sue più ardue speranze.

È questo un vangelo dalmatico su cui possiamo giurare.

Sotto la forza latina di Roma, dei Papi, di Venezia, come sotto la forza barbara dei Goti, dei Longobardi, dei Franchi, degli Ottoni germanici, dei Bisantini, degli Ungari, degli Austriaci, la vita civile della costa di là, come quella della costa di qua, fu costantemente di origine e di essenza italiane. Fu, è, sarà. Non il Tedesco dell'Alpe, non lo Sloveno del Carso, nè il Magiaro della Puszta, nè il Croato che ignora o falsa la storia, nè pure il Turco che si camuffa da Albanese, niuno potrà mai arrestare il ritmo fatale del compimento, il ritmo romano. Io ve lo dico, fratelli, ma voi lo sepate. Su questo vangelo dalmatico possiamo far giuro.

L'antichissima via consolare, che si partiva da Salona per a traverso la Bosnia, non è tuttavia battuta? Ella è, voi lo sapete, il solo cammino che allacci i borghi solinghi e i villaggi dispersi. Ella è così bene condotta, così bene costrutta, così bene assodata che gli uomini dovranno seguirla fino al termine degli evi.

Più lungi, su l'altro versante del monte Koaratch, le rovine robuste d'una città operaia romana si levano in mezzo ai prati e alle selve, in vista alle cime cerulee della Serbia guerriera.

Or sembra che quivi il genio del luogo, *genius loci*, non sia nella lapide inscritto ma grandeggi tuttavia e del suo soffio riempia la curia, il tribunale, l'ipocausto, gli altari, i focolari. Il castro, dissepolto su la riva destra del torrente Saso, ha tuttavia la sua muraglia ben connessa, contro cui non valsero quindici secoli edaci.

Che mai può dunque valere lo sforzo dei barbari contro la legge di Roma? Là dove tali fondamenta ponemmo, là il genio del luogo ci aspetta; là torneremo, là ritroveremo i segni vetusti e intaglieremo i nuovi.

Se stretta è la vostra spiaggia, o Dalmati, amplissima è la civiltà che l'illustra. Siete quasi orlo di toga, ma tutta la toga è romana.

Rallegratevi, miei giovani compagni. Il tempo di servire è

compiuto, il tempo di patire è compiuto. È giunto il tempo di combattere e di redimere; il tempo di liberare e di rivendicare è imminente.

A Lissa perì da prode il guardiamarina dalmata Giovanni Ivancich, somigliante forse a taluno di voi che mi guarda con accesa la battaglia negli occhi lionati.

Come ti chiami, tu che arrossisci, fanciullo? Me lo dirà forse la gloria domani, me lo dirà la libertà nel suo grido sopra il mare sonoro.

Su questo vangelo dalmatico, intanto, giuriamo con un'anima sola.

Così sia, per i figli dei figli e nei secoli dei secoli.

PARTE TERZA

I

Perchè lo studente serbo Gabrilo Princip uccise a Serajevo — il 28 giugno 1914 — l'arciduca Francesco Ferdinando erede del trono d'Austria-Ungheria.

Il 28 giugno 1914 (era domenica) lo studente serbo Gabrilo Princip d'anni 19 uccideva in Serajevo, con due colpi di pistola *Browning*, l'arciduca Francesco Ferdinando, erede della corona imperiale e reale d'Austria-Ungheria, e la di lui moglie Sofia Chotek di Chotkowa e Wognin duchessa di Hohenberg.

Da parecchio tempo — così disse il giovane Princip all'interrogatorio — avevo concepito l'idea d'uccidere un'alta personalità austriaca, per vendicare i Serbi della Bosnia del trattamento loro usato dal governo di Vienna. Non ho complici. Ho voluto solo colpire nella persona dell'arciduca Francesco Ferdinando l'imperialismo austriaco.[1]

[1] Cinque anni dopo l'elevazione di Pietro I Karageorgevic al trono serbo, l'Austria-Ungheria, celebrando i sessant'anni di regno dell'imperatore Francesco Giuseppe, s'annettè, dopo trent'anni d'occupazione e di sfruttamento, la Bosnia e l'Erzegovina, proclamandole "dominio della corona dell'Imperatore e Re".

S'accentuò così alla fine del 1908 tra l'Austria e la Serbia, e contemporaneamente tra l'Austria e la Russia, la tensione che tra le dette tre Potenze esisteva fin dal 1878, nell'irrigidirsi della quale la Germania prese un atteggiamento molto esplicito a favore dell'Austria sua alleata. L'imperatore Guglielmo II fece comprendere che a difesa dell'impero austro-ungarico sarebbe stata sempre pronta "la rilucente spada tedesca". E la Russia dovè finire col riconoscere un'annessione che in tutto il mondo slavo ed anche in Turchia aveva suscitato proteste e dimostrazioni anti-austriache; e in Italia, malgrado i legami triplicistici, aveva prodotto un senso d'amarezza.

La tensione tra l'Austria e la Serbia fu tale, dall'ottobre 1908 al marzo 1909, che per poco non scoppiò una guerra tra i due Stati. Senonchè la sproporzione tra le forze austriache e le forze serbe era più che evidente, e a fianco della Serbia, perchè essa potesse fare contro l'Austria nei Balcani ciò che aveva fatto il Piemonte in Italia nel 1859, non vi era un idealista come Napoleone III. La Russia avrebbe potuto aiutare, sì; ma, dato l'atteggiamento risoluto della Germania, essa non credè prudente spingersi troppo; sollevò, circa l'annessione della Bosnia e dell'Erzegovina, semplici questioni di procedura; poi dichiarò che i suoi precedenti impegni non le permettevano d'impugnare il fatto compiuto creato dall'Austria.

Cosa fare? Alla Serbia non rimaneva altro che piegare il capo: e lo piegò, rilasciando all'Austria, in data 31 marzo 1909, la seguente dichiarazione:

II

La fatale nota-*ultimatum* del governo austriaco al governo serbo (23 luglio 1914).

Il 23 luglio 1914, alle ore 6 pomeridiane, il barone Giesl von Gieslesen, ministro austriaco a Belgrado, presentava in nome del governo di Vienna al ministro delle finanze di Serbia, Patciu, sostituente Pasic presidente dei ministri ch'era assente dalla capitale per un giro elettorale, la fatale nota-*ultimatum* che concludeva così:

Il Governo reale di Serbia farà pubblicare nella prima pagina del suo *Giornale Ufficiale* del 26 luglio 1914 la seguente dichiarazione:

Il Governo reale[1] *condanna la propaganda diretta contro l'Austria-Ungheria, cioè l'insieme delle tendenze che aspirano in ultima analisi a distaccare dalla Monarchia austro-ungarica territori che ne fanno parte*[2] *e deplora sinceramente le conseguenze funeste di queste mene criminose. Il Governo reale deplora che ufficiali e funzionari serbi abbiano partecipato alla summenzionata propaganda e compromesso con ciò le relazioni di buon vicinato a cui il Governo reale si era solennemente impegnato con la sua dichiarazione del 31 marzo 1909. Il Governo reale, che disapprova e ripudia ogni idea e tentativo d'ingerenza nei destini degli abitanti di qualsiasi parte dell'Austria-Ungheria, considera proprio dovere avvertire formalmente gli ufficiali, i funzionari e tutta la popolazione del Regno che, d'ora innanzi, procederà con estremo rigore contro le persone che*

"La Serbia riconosce ch'essa non è stata colpita nei suoi diritti dal fatto compiuto creato in Bosnia ed Erzegovina e che, per conseguenza, essa si conformerà a quelle decisioni che le Potenze prenderanno in relazione all'articolo 25 del trattato di Berlino del 13 luglio 1878.

"Rimettendosi ai consigli delle grandi Potenze, la Serbia s'impegna fin d'ora ad abbandonare l'attitudine di protesta e di opposizione ch'essa aveva adottato dall'autunno scorso riguardo all'annessione della Bosnia-Erzegovina, e s'impegna anche a modificare l'indirizzo della politica attuale verso l'Austria, per vivere ormai con quest'ultima su un piede di buon vicinato."

Ma questo impegno diplomatico non mutò, nè poteva mutare, l'animo dei Serbi verso l'Austria; nè attenuò le intime inquietudini austriache verso i popoli della Serbia propriamente detta e del Montenegro, considerati a Vienna e a Budapest come le sentinelle avanzate di quel movimento panslavista del quale la Russia rimaneva sempre l'alta ispiratrice e patrona.

[1] Il "Governo reale" è il Governo di Serbia.

[2] La Bosnia e l'Erzegovina.

si rendessero colpevoli di simili mene; mene che esso porrà ogni suo sforzo nel prevenire e nel reprimere.

Questa dichiarazione sarà portata contemporaneamente a conoscenza dell'esercito reale con un ordine del giorno di Sua Maestà il Re, e sarà pubblicata nel *Bollettino Ufficiale* dell'esercito.

Il Governo reale s'impegna inoltre a:

1°. sopprimere ogni pubblicazione che ecciti all'odio e al disprezzo contro la Monarchia austro-ungarica e la cui tendenza generale sia diretta contro la sua integrità territoriale;

2°. sciogliere immediatamente la società detta *Narodna Obrana* e confiscarne tutti i mezzi di propaganda; procedere nello stesso modo contro le altre società e sette in Serbia che si dedicano ad una propaganda contro la Monarchia austro-ungarica. Il Governo reale prenderà le misure necessarie perchè le società disciolte non possano continuare la loro attività sotto altro nome e sotto altra forma;

3°. eliminare senza indugio dall'istruzione pubblica in Serbia, tanto per quanto riguarda il corpo insegnante come per quel che riguarda i mezzi d'istruzione, tutto ciò che serve o potrebbe servire a fomentare la propaganda contro l'Austria-Ungheria;

4°. allontanare dal servizio militare e dall'Amministrazione in generale tutti gli ufficiali e funzionari colpevoli di propaganda contro la Monarchia austro-ungarica e dei quali il Governo imperiale e reale [1] si riserva di comunicare nomi e fatti al Governo reale;

5°. accettare la collaborazione in Serbia degli organi del Governo imperiale e reale nella soppressione del movimento sovversivo diretto contro l'integrità territoriale della Monarchia austro-ungarica;

6°. aprire un'inchiesta giudiziaria contro i partecipi del complotto del 28 giugno 1914 che si trovano sul territorio serbo. Organi delegati dal Governo austro-ungarico prenderanno parte alle ricerche relative;

7°. procedere d'urgenza all'arresto del comandante Voijna Tankosic e del nominato Milan Ciganovic impiegato dello Stato serbo, compromessi dai risultati dell'istruttoria di Serajevo;

8°. impedire con misure efficaci il concorso delle autorità serbe nel traffico illecito di armi e di esplosivi attraverso la frontiera; licenziare e punire severamente i funzionari del servizio di frontiera di Schabatz e di Loznica colpevoli d'avere aiutato gli autori del delitto di Serajevo, facilitando loro il passaggio della frontiera;

[1] Il "Governo imperiale e reale" è il Governo austro-ungarico.

9°. dare al Governo austro-ungarico spiegazioni sulle espressioni ingiustificabili di alti funzionari serbi, tanto in Serbia quanto all'estero, che, malgrado la loro situazione ufficiale, non hanno esitato, dopo il delitto del 28 giugno 1914, ad esprimersi in interviste in modo ostile verso la Monarchia austro-ungarica;

10°. avvertire senza ritardo il Governo imperiale e reale della esecuzione delle misure comprese nei punti precedenti.

Il Governo imperiale e reale attende risposta dal Governo reale al più tardi entro sabato 25 del corrente mese di luglio 1914 alle ore 6 di sera.

L'incaricato d'affari russo in Belgrado, Strandtman, spedì immediatamente a Pietroburgo al ministro degli affari esteri Sazanoff il seguente telegramma:

Il ministro d'Austria ha consegnato ora, 6 pomeridiane, al ministro delle finanze Patciu, che sostituisce Pasic, una nota-*ultimatum* del suo Governo, fissante un termine di 48 ore per l'accettazione delle domande contenutevi. Giesl ha soggiunto verbalmente che, nel caso in cui la nota non fosse accettata integralmente nel termine di 48 ore, egli aveva l'ordine di lasciare Belgrado col personale della Legazione. Pasic e gli altri ministri, che si trovano a fare un giro elettorale, sono stati richiamati e sono attesi a Belgrado domani venerdì alle 10 del mattino. Patciu, che mi ha comunicato il contenuto della nota, sollecita l'aiuto della Russia e dichiara che nessun governo serbo potrà accettare le domande dell'Austria.

La mattina del 24 luglio 1914 gli ambasciatori austriaci in Germania, Inghilterra, Russia, Francia, Italia e Turchia, comunicavano rispettivamente ai governi di queste Potenze il testo della nota-*ultimatum* indirizzata dal governo imperiale e reale di Francesco Giuseppe al governo di Serbia il giorno precedente (23 luglio 1914).

III

L'attitudine partigiana della Germania. L'attitudine conciliativa della Russia. Un supplichevole telegramma del principe Alessandro reggente di Serbia allo zar Nicola II. Un eloquente telegramma dell'ambasciatore inglese Buchanan. L'ostinatezza del governo austriaco.

Unanime fu nel mondo la sensazione della gravità della nota-*ultimatum* mandata dal governo di Vienna al governo di Belgrado.

Il pensiero della Germania fu espresso lo stesso giorno 24 luglio 1914 da varî giornali germanici, particolarmente dalla *Kreuz Zeitung* organo del Ministero degli esteri a Berlino.

È da sperare — così diceva il detto giornale — ove il dissidio precipitasse in una guerra, che questa rimanga isolata. La scintilla scoppietta troppo vicino ai barili di polvere dell'Europa; ma finora si può e si deve sperare che le grandi Potenze riconoscano la giustizia delle pretese austriache, e che quindi nessuna di esse andrà in aiuto della Serbia per respingere le giuste domande dell'Austria.

Lo stesso concetto era ribadito e ampliato da un altro comunicato ufficioso berlinese affermante "non essere da credere, fino a prova contraria, che vi sia qualche Potenza disposta a prestare il suo aiuto morale o materiale ai Serbi, giacchè trattasi di questione dalla quale si deve necessariamente risvegliare il sentimento della solidarietà monarchica e della solidarietà fra gli Stati onestamente legati. La Serbia, dunque,— concludeva questa voce ufficiosa — accetterà le richieste austriache, o perirà".

E il *Lokal Anzeiger*:

La Germania si sente molto alleggerita, perchè è finalmente giunto il momento di chiarire definitivamente la situazione balcanica, e si congratula con l'Impero alleato per la virile risoluzione, e gli assicura fedeltà e aiuto incondizionato nei difficili giorni a cui va incontro.

E questo non era soltanto il sentimento dei circoli governativi germanici, dei quali anche il *Lokal Anzeiger* era portavoce, ma pur quello del popolo tedesco, com'era dimostrato dall'unanimità dei suoi organi e dalle entusiastiche manifestazioni popolari in tutte le grandi città della Germania: da Berlino a Monaco. Non eravi accordo nelle previsioni (aggiustamento pacifico o guerra); ma tutti concordavano che "la Germania sarà, in qualunque caso, a fianco dell'Austria".

Intanto il ministro degli affari esteri di Russia, Sazonoff, appena informato del passo austriaco presso il governo serbo, e appena ricevuta dall'incaricato russo in Belgrado la richiesta d'aiuto in favore della Serbia, trasmise, lo stesso giorno 24 luglio 1914, per mezzo del proprio ambasciatore Kudachew, la seguente dichiarazione al governo di Vienna:

La comunicazione del Governo austriaco alle Potenze, l'indomani della presentazione dell'*ultimatum* a Belgrado, non lascia alle Potenze stesse che un termine del tutto insufficiente per intraprendere ciò che possa essere utile per l'appianamento delle complicazioni sorte.

Per prevenire le conseguenze incalcolabili, ed egualmente nefaste per tutte le Potenze, che possano susseguire al modo d'agire del Governo austriaco, ci pare indispensabile che, innanzi tutto, il termine dato alla Serbia per rispondere sia prolungato. L'Austria, dichiarandosi disposta ad informare le Potenze dei risultati dell'istruttoria [1] sui quali il Governo imperiale e reale basa le proprie accuse, dovrebbe dar loro ugualmente il tempo di rendersene conto.

In questo caso, se le Potenze si convincessero della piena fondatezza di talune esigenze austriache, si troverebbero in grado di far pervenire al Governo serbo consigli in correlazione. Un rifiuto di prolungare il termine dell'*ultimatum* priverebbe di ogni efficacia il passo del Governo austriaco presso le Potenze e sarebbe in contradizione con le basi medesime delle relazioni internazionali.

Mentre la Russia faceva a Vienna un tale passo, raccomandandolo contemporaneamente all'attenzione dei

[1] Dall'istruttoria eseguita da agenti austriaci in Serajevo, risultò che l'uccisione dell'arciduca ereditario Francesco Ferdinando ebbe luogo in séguito ad un complotto del quale fecero parte ufficiali dell'esercito e funzionari governativi serbi.

governi di Londra, Berlino, Parigi e Roma, il principe reggente di Serbia, Alessandro, indirizzava allo zar Nicola II a Pietroburgo un telegramma così concepito:

Il Governo austriaco ha rimesso ieri sera al Governo serbo una nota concernente il delitto di Serajevo. Conscia dei suoi doveri internazionali, la Serbia, fin dal primo giorno dell'orribile delitto, ha dichiarato ch'essa lo condannava e ch'era pronta ad aprire un'inchiesta sul proprio territorio, se la complicità di certi suoi sudditi risultasse provata nel corso del processo incoato dalle autorità austriache. Per conseguenza, le domande contenute nella nota austriaca sono inutilmente umilianti per la Serbia ed incompatibili con la sua dignità quale Stato indipendente. Ci è dato un termine di 48 ore per accettare ogni cosa, senza di che la Legazione austriaca lascerà Belgrado. Siamo pronti ad accettare le condizioni austriache compatibili con la situazione di uno Stato indipendente, come pure quelle la cui accettazione ci sarà consigliata da Vostra Maestà; tutte le persone la cui partecipazione nel delitto di Serajevo sarà dimostrata saranno severamente punite da noi. Talune delle domande austriache non potrebbero essere eseguite senza mutamenti nella nostra legislazione; ció che richiede del tempo. Ci è stato dato un termine troppo breve. Possiamo essere attaccati, appena spirato il termine, dall'esercito austriaco che si concentra sulla nostra frontiera. Ci è impossibile difenderci, e supplichiamo Vostra Maestà di darci il suo aiuto al più presto possibile. La benevolenza preziosa di Vostra Maestà, manifestatasi tante volte a nostro riguardo, ci fa sperare fermamente che questa volta ancóra il nostro appello sarà udito dal suo generoso cuore slavo. In questi momenti difficili, io interpreto il sentimento del popolo serbo che supplica Vostra Maestà di volersi bene interessare alle sorti del Regno di Serbia.

Inoltre, l'ambasciatore inglese a Pietroburgo, Buchanan, il 25 luglio 1914 informava Sir Edward Grey a Londra che la Russia era favorevole ad un appello della Serbia alle Potenze.

Il ministro degli esteri russo Sazonoff — così diceva Buchanan nel suo telegramma a Grey — desidererebbe vedere la questione posta su di una base internazionale, poichè gl'impegni assunti dalla Serbia nel 1909, ai quali si allude nell'*ultimatum* austriaco, furono dati non all'Austria ma alle Potenze. Se la Serbia si appellasse alle Potenze, la Russia sarebbe ben disposta a starsene in disparte

e lasciare la questione nelle mani dell'Inghilterra, della Francia, della Germania e dell'Italia.

Ma nel pomeriggio del 25 luglio 1914 il barone Macchio, primo sostituto del ministro degli esteri d'Austria, conte di Berchtold assente dalla capitale, comunicava all'ambasciatore russo in Vienna che il governo austriaco non aveva creduto di potere accogliere la domanda della Russia di prorogare alla Serbia il termine per la risposta, sostenendo "che la soluzione dell'incidente con la Serbia è una questione che interessa esclusivamente l'Austria e la Serbia. L'Austria è quindi decisa in qualsivoglia circostanza a respingere ogni tentativo d'intervento straniero".

IV

La risposta del governo serbo (25 luglio 1914) alla nota-*ultimatum* del governo austriaco.

Le 48 ore — proprio quante l'Austria ne aveva concesse al Piemonte nel 1859 — stavano per spirare. Venti minuti prima, vale a dire alle 5.40 pomeridiane del 25 luglio 1914, il primo ministro serbo Pasic consegnava al ministro austriaco in Belgrado la seguente nota di risposta della Serbia alla nota-*ultimatum* del governo di Vienna:

Il Governo reale ha ricevuto la dichiarazione del Governo imperiale e reale del 23 luglio 1914, ed è persuaso che la sua risposta allontanerà tutti i malintesi che minacciano di compromettere i buoni rapporti di vicinanza tra la Monarchia austro-ungarica e il Regno di Serbia.

La Serbia ha, a numerose riprese, dato prove della sua politica pacifica ed ha dimostrato durante la crisi balcanica che, grazie alla Serbia ed ai sacrifici da essa compiuti nel più vivo interesse della pace europea, questa pace è stata conservata.

Il Governo reale non può essere reso responsabile di manifestazioni di carattere privato, come gli articoli dei giornali e le mene delle società, manifestazioni che si verificano quasi in tutti i paesi come una cosa ordinaria e che sfuggono, in regola generale, al controllo ufficiale, tanto più in quanto il Governo reale, in occasione della

soluzione di tutta una serie di questioni che si sono presentate tra la Serbia e l'Austria-Ungheria, ha mostrato una grande cortesia ed è in tal modo riuscito a risolvere il massimo numero con vantaggio del progresso dei due paęsi vicini.

Perciò il Governo reale è stato penosamente sorpreso dalle osservazioni secondo le quali persone del Regno serbo avrebbero partecipato ad una preparazione del delitto commesso a Serajevo. Esso s'aspettava d'essere invitato a collaborare alla ricerca di tutto quanto si riferisce a quel delitto, ed è pronto a dimostrare con gli atti la sua piena correttezza e ad agire contro tutte le persone, a proposito delle quali gli fossero fatte comunicazioni.

Aderendo dunque al desiderio del Governo imperiale e reale, il Governo reale è disposto a consegnare al Tribunale ogni suddito serbo, senza riguardo alla sua situazione e alla sua classe, per la cui complicità nel misfatto di Serajevo gli saranno fornite prove. Esso s'impegna specialmente a far pubblicare nella prima pagina del *Giornale Ufficiale* del 26 luglio 1914 la seguente enunciazione:

Il Governo reale di Serbia condanna ogni propaganda che fosse diretta contro l'Austria-Ungheria, cioè il complesso delle tendenze che aspirano, in ultima analisi, a staccare dalla Monarchia austro-ungarica territori che ne fanno parte, e deplora sinceramente le funeste conseguenze di queste delittuose mene. Il Governo reale si duole che alcuni ufficiali e funzionari serbi abbiano partecipato, secondo la comunicazione del Governo imperiale e reale, alla propaganda summenzionata e compromesso così le relazioni di buon vicinato alle quali il Governo reale si era solennemente impegnato con la sua dichiarazione del 31 marzo 1909. Il Governo reale, che disapprova e respinge ogni idea o tentativo d'ingerenza nei destini degli abitanti di qualsiasi parte dell'Austria-Ungheria, considera come suo dovere avvertire formalmente gli ufficiali, i funzionari e la popolazione del Regno di Serbia che, d'ora innanzi, procederà con estremo rigore contro le persone che si rendessero colpevoli di simili mene e porrà ogni sforzo nel prevenirle e nel reprimerle.

Questa enunciazione sarà portata a cognizione dell'esercito serbo con un ordine del giorno, a nome di Sua Maestà il Re, da Sua Altezza Reale il Principe Ereditario Alessandro, e sarà pubblicata nel prossimo *Bollettino Ufficiale dell'Esercito*.

Il Governo reale s'impegna inoltre:

1°. A presentare alla prima convocazione regolare della Scupcina una disposizione nella legge sulla stampa, con la quale saranno puniti nel modo più severo gl'incitamenti all'odio e al

disprezzo contro la Monarchia austro-ungarica ed ogni pubblicazione la cui tendenza generale sia diretta contro l'integrità territoriale dell'Austria-Ungheria. Esso s'incarica, al momento della revisione della Costituzione che è imminente, di fare introdurre nell'articolo 22 della Costituzione medesima un emendamento di natura tale che le pubblicazioni di cui sopra possano essere confiscate, ciò che attualmente, a termini categorici del suddetto articolo 22, è impossibile.

2°. Il Governo reale non possiede alcuna prova — e la nota del Governo imperiale e reale non gliene fornisce nemmeno alcuna — che la società *Narodna Obrana* e le altre società similari abbiano fino ad oggi commesso qualche atto delittuoso di questo genere. Tuttavia il Governo reale accoglierà le domande del Governo imperiale e reale, e scioglierà la *Narodna Obrana* e qualsiasi altra società che agisse contro l'Austria-Ungheria.

3°. Il Governo reale s'impegna di eliminare senza indugio dall'istruzione pubblica in Serbia tutto quanto serve o potrebbe servire a fomentare la propaganda contro l'Austria-Ungheria, quando il Governo imperiale e reale gli fornirà fatti e prove di questa propaganda.

4°. Il Governo reale accetta anche di allontanare dal servizio militare coloro che l'inchiesta giudiziaria avrà provato essere colpevoli di atti diretti contro l'integrità dei territori della Monarchia austro-ungarica, ed attende che il Governo imperiale e reale gli comunichi ulteriormente i nomi e gli atti di questi ufficiali e funzionari al fine della procedura che deve essere seguíta.

5°. Il Governo reale deve confessare che non si rende interamente conto del senso e della portata della domanda del Governo imperiale e reale tendente a che la Serbia s'impegni ad accettare sul suo territorio la collaborazione degli organi imperiali e reali; ma dichiara che ammetterà ogni collaborazione la quale risponda ai princípi del diritto internazionale e alla procedura penale, nonchè ai rapporti di buon vicinato.

6°. Il Governo reale, com'è naturale, considera suo dovere d'aprire un'inchiesta contro tutti coloro che sono o eventualmente si sarebbero trovati immischiati nel complotto del 28 giugno 1914 e che si troverebbero nel territorio del Regno. Quanto alla partecipazione a questa inchiesta degli agenti delle autorità austro-ungariche che sarebbero delegati a tale intento dal Governo imperiale e reale, il Governo reale non può accoglierla, perchè sarebbe una violazione della Costituzione e della legge di procedura criminale. Tuttavia, in casi concreti, comunicazioni sui risultati

dell'istruttoria in questione potrebbero essere date agli organi del Governo imperiale e reale.

7°. Il Governo reale ha fatto procedere fin dalla sera stessa della consegna della nota all'arresto del comandante Voijna Tankosic. Quanto a Milan Ciganovic, che è suddito della Monarchia austro-ungarica e che sino al 28 giugno 1914 era impiegato come aspirante alla Direzione delle ferrovie, non è stato ancóra raggiunto. Il Governo imperiale e reale è pregato di volere, nella forma abituale e al più presto possibile, render note le presunzioni di colpabilità e le prove eventuali di colpabilità che sono state raccolte sino ad oggi dall'inchiesta di Serajevo per ulteriori inchieste.

8°. Il Governo reale rinforzerà ed estenderà le misure prese per impedire l'illecito traffico di armi e di esplosivi attraverso la frontiera. Esso ordinerà subito un'inchiesta e punirà certamente i funzionari di frontiera sulla linea Schabatz-Loznica, i quali hanno mancato al loro dovere ed hanno lasciato passare gli autori del delitto di Serajevo.

9°. Il Governo reale darà volentieri spiegazioni sui giudízi che i suoi funzionari, così in Serbia come all'estero, hanno espresso in interviste dopo il delitto e che, secondo l'affermazione del Governo imperiale e reale, sono stati ostili alla Monarchia austro-ungarica, non appena il Governo imperiale e reale gli avrà comunicato le relative frasi di questi giudízi e gli avrà dimostrato che i giudízi stessi sono stati infatti espressi dai funzionari suddetti: giudízi, a proposito dei quali il Governo reale avrà cura di raccogliere prove e conferme.

10°. Il Governo reale informerà il Governo imperiale e reale dell'esecuzione delle misure comprese nei punti precedenti, in quanto questo non sia già stato fatto dalla presente nota, non appena che ciascuna misura sarà stata ordinata ed eseguita.

Nel caso che il Governo imperiale e reale non fosse soddisfatto di questa risposta, il Governo reale, considerando essere nel comune interesse di non precipitare la soluzione di tale questione, è pronto, come sempre, ad accettare un accordo pacifico, rimettendo tale questione sia alla decisione del Tribunale internazionale dell'Aia, sia alle grandi Potenze che hanno partecipato alla elaborazione della dichiarazione fatta dal Governo reale il 31 marzo 1909.

Il comunicato telegrafico, annunziante la consegna fatta da Pasic al ministro austriaco in Belgrado della nota su riferita, era concepito, come informazione dell'ufficioso *Correspondenz Bureau* di Vienna del 25 luglio 1914, così:

Il presidente del Consiglio serbo Pasic s'è recato prima delle ore 6 pomeridiane alla Legazione austro-ungarica a Belgrado, e ha dato una risposta insufficiente alla nota austro-ungarica.

Il ministro d'Austria-Ungheria, barone Giesl, ha allora notificato a Pasic la rottura delle relazioni diplomatiche, ed ha lasciato col personale della Legazione, alle ore 6.30 pomeridiane, Belgrado.

V

Un eloquente telegramma dell'ambasciatore inglese a Vienna, Maurizio de Bunsen, a Sir Edward Grey (27 luglio 1914). Un comunicato ufficioso del governo russo pubblicato dal *Corriere della Borsa* di Pietroburgo (27 luglio 1914). La risposta dello zar Nicola II al principe Alessandro reggente di Serbia (27 luglio 1914). I ringraziamenti del principe Alessandro allo zar Nicola II.

Il 27 luglio 1914 l'ambasciatore inglese a Vienna, Maurizio de Bunsen, inviava a Londra a Sir Edward Grey il seguente telegramma:

Ho avuto conversazioni con tutti i miei colleghi rappresentanti le grandi Potenze. L'impressione che me ne è derivata è che la Nota austro -ungarica fu compilata in quel modo per rendere inevitabile la guerra; che il Governo austro-ungarico è assolutamente deciso ad avere la guerra con la Serbia; che esso considera la propria posizione di grande Potenza in gioco, e che finchè un castigo non sia stato inflitto alla Serbia, è improbabile ch'esso voglia prestare ascolto a voci di mediazione. Questo paese (l'Austria-Ungheria) sta impazzendo dalla gioia all'idea della guerra contro la Serbia, ed il rinviarla, o prevenirla, cagionerebbe indubbiamente una grande contrarietà.

Il *Corriere della Borsa* di Pietroburgo in data 27 luglio 1914 pubblicava il seguente comunicato di carattere ufficioso:

La Russia sarà pronta a rispondere con tutti i mezzi dei quali dispone una grande Potenza a qualsiasi indizio il quale dimostrasse che si disprezzano le sue legittime domande. La Russia non

permetterà l'annientamento d'uno Stato slavo, ma è pronta a sostenere l'Austria-Ungheria nelle sue domande giustificate, come a raccomandare alla Serbia di non essere intransigente. Tuttavia la Russia non permetterà mai che si punisca l'intero popolo serbo per il delitto di un privato. Nè la Russia, nè la Serbia possono consentire un'ingerenza sui diritti sovrani d'uno Stato balcanico.

E lo zar Nicola II, rispondendo lo stesso giorno 27 luglio 1914 al telegramma supplicativo indirizzatogli il 24 luglio 1914 dal principe Alessandro reggente di Serbia, faceva augúri e raccomandazioni, ed esprimeva fiducia nelle trattative "che impedirebbero" — diceva egli di sperare — la guerra; ma soggiungeva: "se, malgrado il nostro più sincero desiderio, non riusciremo, Vostra Altezza può essere sicura che in nessun caso la Russia si disinteresserà delle sorti della Serbia".

Quando l'incaricato russo in Serbia, Strandtman, consegnò al primo ministro serbo il telegramma confortante che lo zar aveva diretto al principe Alessandro, Pasic, dopo averlo letto, si fece il segno della croce ed esclamò: "O Signore, lo zar è grande e clemente!" — Poi, non potendo più frenare l'emozione che l'aveva preso, abbracciò Strandtman e pianse.

E il principe Alessandro ringraziava telegraficamente lo zar in questi termini:

Profondamente toccato dal telegramma che Vostra Maestà ha ben voluto indirizzarmi, m'affretto a ringraziarla con tutto il mio cuore. Prego Vostra Maestà di essere persuasa che la cordiale simpatia da cui Vostra Maestà è animata verso il nostro paese ci è particolarmente preziosa e riempie la nostra anima della speranza che l'avvenire della Serbia è assicurato, poichè questa nazione è divenuta l'oggetto dell'alta sollecitudine di Vostra Maestà. Questi momenti penosi non possono che rinsaldare i vincoli dell'attaccamento profondo che uniscono la Serbia alla Santa Russia slava; e i sentimenti di riconoscenza eterna per la protezione e l'aiuto di Vostra Maestà saranno conservati devotamente nell'anima di tutti i Serbi.

VI

La dichiarazione di guerra del governo austriaco alla Serbia (27 luglio 1914). Il proclama dell'imperatore Francesco Giuseppe ai suoi popoli (28 luglio 1914). Lo zar Nicola II telegrafa urgentemente (29 luglio 1914) a Guglielmo II imperatore di Germania, pregandolo di scongiurare la guerra. La risposta e le pubbliche dichiarazioni di Guglielmo II (31 luglio 1914).

Ma l'irremovibile proposito del governo austriaco veniva annunziato il 27 luglio 1914 con questa comunicazione del governo stesso alle Potenze europee:

Per mettere fine alle mene sovversive partenti da Belgrado e dirette contro l'integrità territoriale della Monarchia austro-ungarica, il Governo imperiale e reale ha fatto pervenire in data 23 luglio 1914 al Governo reale di Serbia una Nota nella quale si trovava formulata una serie di domande per l'accettazione delle quali un termine di 48 ore era stato accordato al Governo reale. Il Governo reale non avendo risposto a questa Nota in modo soddisfacente, il Governo imperiale e reale si trova nella necessità di provvedere esso stesso alla difesa dei suoi diritti e dei suoi interessi, e di ricorrere a tale effetto alla forza delle armi.

L'Austria-Ungheria, che ha indirizzato contemporaneamente alla Serbia una dichiarazione formale, in conformità dell'articolo 1° della Convenzione del 18 ottobre 1907, relativa all'apertura delle ostilità, si considera da questo momento in istato di guerra con la Serbia.

L'indomani — 28 luglio 1914 — l'imperatore Francesco Giuseppe lanciava da Vienna un proclama, nel quale, tra l'altro, diceva ai "suoi" popoli:

Il mio più grande desiderio fu sempre quello di consacrare gli anni, che la grazia di Dio ancóra mi riserva, alle opere di pace, e di preservare i miei popoli dai gravi sacrifici e dagli oneri della guerra. Ma la Provvidenza ha deciso altrimenti. La condotta d'un avversario pieno d'odio mi obbliga, per difendere l'onore della mia Monarchia, per proteggere la sua autorità e la sua potenza, per garantire la sua posizione, a prendere in mano la spada, dopo lunghi anni di pace.

Mi vedo costretto a crearmi con la forza le garanzie indispensabili che devono assicurare al mio Stato la calma all'interno e la pace permanente all'estero.

Assumo in quest'ora grave tutto il peso della mia decisione e la responsabilità a cui vado incontro di fronte all'onnipotente Iddio. Ho tutto esaminato e tutto studiato. In tutta coscienza m'impegno nella via che m'è mostrata dal dovere. Ho fiducia nel mio popolo che durante tante tempeste si è sempre riunito intorno al mio trono; ho fiducia nell'esercito dell'Austria-Ungheria animato da sentimenti di valore e di devozione. Ho fiducia nell'onnipotente Iddio, che darà ai miei eserciti la vittoria.

Il 29 luglio 1914 lo zar Nicola II telegrafava a Guglielmo II imperatore di Germania:

In questo momento tanto grave ti supplico d'aiutarmi. Una guerra vile è stata dichiarata contro un paese debole. In Russia lo sdegno, ch'io condivido, è enorme. Prevedo che ben tosto non potrò più resistere alla pressione esercitata su di me, e sarò costretto a prendere delle misure che condurranno alla guerra europea. Ti prego, in nome della nostra vecchia amicizia, di fare tutto il possibile per impedire al Tuo alleato d'andare troppo oltre.

Ma Guglielmo II rispose insistendo che l'Austria aveva agito bene, che bisognava restringere il conflitto tra l'Austria e la Serbia, che in tutti i casi la Germania sarebbe stata con la sua alleata Austria.

Gli avvenimenti non potevano che aggravarsi e precipitare rapidissimamente.

Guglielmo II a Berlino, nel pomeriggio del 31 luglio 1914 — quando, acclamato da immensa folla commossa, fu costretto ad affacciarsi al balcone del castello imperiale con a fianco l'imperatrice, il principe ereditario e la moglie di costui, il cancelliere e i più alti personaggi di Corte— pronunziò queste parole:

Una difficile ora è oggi piombata sulla Germania. Da tutte le parti ci costringono con mio rammarico ad una giusta difesa, obbligandoci a prendere le armi. Se all'ultim'ora gli sforzi nostri non riusciranno a indurre i nostri avversari a ravvedersi e a mantenere la pace ch'io ho cercato per 25 anni, spero che noi, con l'aiuto di Dio, snuderemo la spada, e spero che la rinfodereremo con onore.

Voi dovrete sopportare enormi sacrifizi di sangue e di benessere, ma li sopporterete, io lo so: ed ai nostri avversari mostreremo che cosa significhi aggredire la Germania.

Io vi raccomando a Dio. Andate nelle chiese e pregate il Signore perchè conceda la vittoria all'esercito tedesco e alla causa tedesca.

Il 1° agosto 1914 la Germania dichiarava guerra alla Russia.

Il 3 agosto 1914 la Germania dichiarava guerra alla Francia.

Il 3 agosto 1914 la Germania dichiarava guerra al Belgio.

VII

Il trattato della Triplice Alleanza stipulato tra i governi d'Italia, Austria e Germania (1882–1912). Gli articoli 3, 4 e 7 del trattato stesso.

Quando nel settembre 1877 Francesco Crispi, non ancóra, fino a quel momento, salito al governo d'Italia, s'incontrò a Wildbad col principe di Bismarck e accennò a un'alleanza difensiva possibile tra la Germania e l'Italia, e toccò della complicata "Questione Orientale", si sentì rispondere dal cancelliere di ferro: "Se l'Austria si prenderà la Bosnia, l'Italia si prenda l'Albania o qualche altra terra turca sull'Adriatico".

L'anno dopo (1878), l'Austria, seguendo la decisione del Congresso di Berlino, si "prese" la Bosnia; ma l'Italia non si "prese" l'Albania.

Invece, il 31 ottobre 1881, Umberto I di Savoia, accompagnato dalla regina Margherita a dai ministri Depretis e Mancini, andò improvvisamente "per motivi di politica estera" a visitare l'imperatore Francesco Giuseppe a Vienna.

E il 20 maggio 1882 i governi d'Italia, d'Austria e di Germania stipulavano il famoso trattato della Triplice Alleanza, che fu poi rinnovato nel 1887, nel 1897, nel 1902 e, infine, nel 1912 per altri dodici anni.

Avvenuta la sottoscrizione del trattato, il principe di

Bismarck, in un discorso da lui pronunciato al Parlamento germanico nella tornata del 12 giugno 1882, si epresse così:

Noi siamo ora uniti e alleati, o signori, con due grandi monarchie — l'Italia e l'Austria — le quali difendono i nostri interessi e vogliono la pace come noi la vogliamo.

Dai documenti pubblicati dopo lo scoppio della grande guerra, risultò che il trattato della Triplice Alleanza stipulato tra l'Italia, l'Austria e la Germania nel 1882, e rinnovato l'ultima volta nel 1912 per altri dodici anni, conteneva, tra l'altro, tre articoli (gli articoli 3, 4 e 7), i quali erano del seguente tenore:

Articolo 3. Qualora una o due delle Potenze contraenti, senza diretta provocazione da parte loro, fossero attaccate da due o più grandi Potenze non firmatarie del presente trattato e si trovassero con queste Potenze in guerra, sorgerebbe immediatamente il *casus foederis* per tutt'e tre le Potenze contraenti.

Articolo 4. Qualora una grande Potenza non firmataria del presente trattato minacciasse la sicurezza nazionale di una delle tre Potenze contraenti, e la nazione minacciata fosse per tal modo costretta a dichiarare la guerra, le altre due Potenze si obbligano a mantenere verso la loro alleata una neutralità benevola. Ognuna di esse, però, se lo crederà conveniente, potrà partecipare alla guerra per fare causa comune con l'alleata.

Articolo 7. L'Austria e l'Italia, nell'intento di mantenere lo *statu quo* in Oriente, s'obbligano di adoperarsi con tutta la loro influenza per evitare qualsiasi mutamento territoriale dannoso all'una o all'altra delle Potenze contraenti. Esse si daranno reciprocamente tutte le informazioni atte a chiarire le intenzioni rispettive, come pure quelle delle altre Potenze. Se tuttavia si desse il caso che nel corso degli avvenimenti il mantenimento dello *statu quo* nel territorio dei Balcani e sulle coste e nelle isole ottomane dell'Adriatico e dell'Egeo divenisse impossibile e che — sia in conseguenza dell'azione d'una terza Potenza, sia per altre cause — l'Austria e l'Italia fossero costrette a mutare lo *statu quo* con un'occupazione temporanea o permanente da parte loro, questa occupazione potrà avvenire soltanto dopo precedenti accordi tra le due Potenze in base al principio di un reciproco consenso [1] per tutti i vantaggi territoriali o d'altra specie che l'una

[1] Qualche pubblicazione dice: "basati sul principio di un reciproco compenso".

o l'altra venisse a conseguire oltre al presente *statu quo* e in modo da soddisfare gl'interessi e le pretese giustificate d'ambo le parti.

VIII

Come il governo d'Austria, con la sua nota-*ultimatum* del 23 luglio 1914 e la conseguente dichiarazione di guerra del 27 luglio 1914 alla Serbia, violò il trattato della Triplice Alleanza ai danni dell'Italia.

Il *Giornale d'Italia* (il grande quotidiano ufficioso di Roma) in data 1° agosto 1914 pubblicava:

Durante la gravissima crisi provocata dalla nota-*ultimatum* dell'Austria alla Serbia, il Governo italiano lavorò attivamente, tenendosi specialmente in contatto col Governo inglese, per evitare le complicazioni europee e mantenere la pace. Purtroppo l'azione pacificatrice italo-inglese non riuscì nell'intento, e di giorno in giorno le probabilità d'una conflagrazione europea si fecero maggiori, sicchè il Governo italiano dovette considerare la situazione che in un eventuale conflitto sarebbe stata fatta all'Italia, e si trovò concorde nel considerare alcuni punti, che si possono riassumere:

1°. La nota-*ultimatum* dell'Austria alla Serbia fu comunicata al Governo italiano *dopo* ch'era stata già comunicata al Governo serbo, sicchè non vi fu da parte della Cancelleria di Vienna nè alcun preavviso, nè alcuna trattativa col Gabinetto di Roma, circa la gravissima decisione che immediatamente ebbe una portata europea.

2°. Una delle caratteristiche fondamentali del trattato della Triplice Alleanza è che nessuna delle alleate possa intraprendere un'azione nei Balcani senza preventivamente accordarsi con le altre alleate. Ora, un tale preventivo accordo fra l'Austria e l'Italia non vi fu.

3°. La Triplice Alleanza ha carattere difensivo, non aggressivo, e non può obbligare gli alleati a seguire quello di essi che intendesse intraprendere per proprio conto e senza preventiva intesa un'azione aggressiva, com'è appunto quella dell'Austria contro la Serbia.

4°. Interesse fondamentale dell'Italia è che l'equilibrio balcanico risultante dalle recenti guerre nell'Oriente europeo non

venga turbato, e continui invece a prevalere il concetto: *i Balcani ai popoli balcanici.* Ora, l'azione militare dell'Austria contro la Serbia — tuttochè la Cancelleria di Vienna abbia dichiarato di non aver mire territoriali — è invece tale da poter provocare un mutamento dell'equilibrio suddetto.

5°. L'Italia, non essendo stata preavvisata di quanto l'Austria stava per intraprendere, non potè prendere, nell'eventualità di prevedibilissime complicazioni europee, neanche talune precauzioni necessarie per la tutela dei propri più vitali interessi.

Su questi punti sostanziali il Consiglio dei ministri d'Italia tenutosi il 1° agosto 1914 si trovò d'accordo. Del resto il Governo italiano non aveva mancato di far conoscere ai Governi di Vienna e di Berlino il proprio punto di vista, assicurando che l'Italia avrebbe bensì tenuto in qualunque caso un atteggiamento amichevole verso le Alleate, ma osservando che l'improvvisa e non concertata azione dell'Austria contro la Serbia non poteva imporre all'Italia l'obbligo di seguire l'Austria dovunque, e che l'obiettivo dell'Italia era essenzialmente pacifico.

La sera del 2 agosto 1914 lo stesso *Giornale d'Italia* pubblicava:

Questa mattina, poco prima di mezzogiorno, l'ambasciatore germanico a Roma, barone von Flotow, s'è recato dal nostro ministro degli esteri alla Consulta, e gli ha comunicato che la Germania aveva dichiarato guerra alla Russia. Il marchese di San Giuliano, ministro degli esteri d'Italia, ha preso atto della comunicazione e ha dichiarato che l'Italia, ispirandosi allo spirito e alla lettera del trattato della Triplice Alleanza, non ritiene che l'attuale conflitto, così com'è sorto e s'è svolto, possa costituire il *casus foederis* per la partecipazione dell'Italia al conflitto stesso. Quindi l'onorevole di San Giuliano ha soggiunto che l'Italia manterrà la più rigorosa neutralità.

IX

La dichiarazione di neutralità dell'Italia (4 agosto 1914).

Il 4 agosto 1914 la *Gazzetta Ufficiale* del Regno d'Italia pubblicava:

Il Consiglio dei ministri d'Italia ha deliberato il testo seguente della dichiarazione di neutralità:

Trovandosi alcune Potenze d'Europa in istato di guerra, ed essendo l'Italia in istato di pace con tutte le parti belligeranti, il Governo del Re e i cittadini e sudditi del Regno hanno l'obbligo di osservare i doveri della neutralità, secondo le leggi vigenti e secondo i princípi del diritto internazionale.

Chiunque violerà questi doveri subirà le conseguenze del proprio operato e incorrerà, quando sia il caso, nelle pene dalla legge sancite.

Tale proclamazione di neutralità fu concordemente approvata dai socialisti, dai repubblicani, dai radicali, dai democratici, dai progressisti e da molti del partito costituzionale liberale, per ragioni pacifiste astratte dottrinarie di princípi, per ragioni di partito e per gravitazione storica del loro contenuto sentimentale e massonico contro l'Austria cattolica, contro il militarismo germanico, contro la Triplice Alleanza, per la preoccupazione delle condizioni finanziarie economiche apparse molto delicate per lo Stato e per il paese dopo l'impresa di Libia che aveva portato al Tesoro pubblico un aggravio — da fronteggiare con tributi nuovi e con rincrudimento di tributi vecchi — non inferiore ad un miliardo di lire. Fu approvata da cittadini d'ogni specie non partecipanti alle passioni in un senso o nell'altro dei partiti, non rappresentativi, non agitantisi, per contrarietà in genere alla guerra e ad imprese avventurose, per il desiderio — nell'interesse generale della nazione — d'un lungo periodo di pace e di fecondo lavoro. Fu invece riprovata e combattuta dai fautori non certo numerosi dell'intervento immediato a fianco della Germania e dell'Austria, dai triplicisti ad oltranza (liberali, moderati, conservatori, nazionalisti giovani), perchè convinti, questi, della necessità da parte del popolo italiano d'affrontare in Europa il cimento della guerra, allo scopo di portare la nazione al conseguimento dei suoi confini naturali da *ogni parte* e alla sua maggiore e naturale espansione sui mari circostanti, e prepararle così un più proficuo, un più sicuro, un più degno avvenire nel mondo.

X

Il governo d'Italia, in data 3 maggio 1915, denunzia il trattato della Triplice Alleanza.

Ma se la grande maggioranza degl'Italiani era stata per la neutralità durante il 1914, nel 1915 essa fu per la guerra.

In data 3 maggio 1915 il barone Sydney Sonnino, ministro degli affari esteri d'Italia, faceva presentare dall'ambasciatore italiano a Vienna la seguente nota al ministro degli affari esteri d'Austria-Ungheria:

L'alleanza tra l'Italia e l'Austria-Ungheria s'affermò, fin dalle sue origini, come un elemento e una garanzia di pace, e mirò prima di tutto allo scopo principale della difesa comune.

In presenza degli ulteriori avvenimenti e della nuova situazione che ne risultò, i Governi dei due paesi dovettero proporsi un altro scopo non meno essenziale, e nel corso dei rinnovamenti successivi del trattato, essi s'adoperarono a salvaguardare la continuazione della loro alleanza, stipulando il principio degli accordi preliminari relativamente ai Balcani, allo scopo di conciliare gl'interessi e le tendenze divergenti delle due Potenze.

È più che evidente che tali stipulazioni, osservate lealmente, sarebbero bastate a fornire una base solida per un'azione comune e feconda. Al contrario, l'Austria-Ungheria, durante l'estate del 1914, senza prendere nessun accordo con l'Italia, senza farle pervenire neppure il minimo avviso e non tenendo alcun conto dei consigli di moderazione che le furono dati dal Governo Reale, notificò alla Serbia l'*ultimatum* del 23 luglio 1914 che fu la causa e il punto di partenza della presente conflagrazione europea.

L'Austria-Ungheria, negligendo le obbligazioni derivanti dal trattato d'alleanza, turbò profondamente lo *statu quo* balcanico e creò una situazione dalla quale essa sola era chiamata a profittarne, a detrimento degl'interessi di grandissima importanza che la sua alleata aveva tante volte affermati e proclamati.

Una violazione così flagrante della lettera e dello spirito del trattato, non solamente giustificò il rifiuto dell'Italia di schierarsi a fianco degli alleati in una guerra provocata senza il suo consenso, ma tolse nel medesimo tempo all'alleanza il suo contenuto essenziale e la sua ragione d'essere.

La condizione stessa della neutralità benevola prevista dal

trattato si trovò compromessa per siffatta violazione. La ragione e il sentimento, infatti, si trovano concordi nello escludere che la neutralità benevola possa essere mantenuta quando uno degli alleati prende le armi per la realizzazione d'un programma diametralmente opposto agl'interessi vitali dell'altro alleato, interessi, la cui salvaguardia costituisce la ragione principale dell'alleanza stessa.

Ciò non pertanto l'Italia si sforzò per parecchi mesi di creare una situazione favorevole al ristabilimento tra i due Stati di quei rapporti amichevoli che costituiscono il fondamento essenziale di ogni cooperazione nel dominio della politica generale.

Con questo scopo e con questa speranza il Governo Reale si dichiarò disposto a prestarsi ad un accomodamento che avesse per base la soddisfazione in una misura equa delle legittime aspirazioni nazionali dell'Italia e che fosse servito nello stesso tempo a ridurre la disparità esistente nella situazione reciproca dei due Stati nell'Adriatico.

Senonchè questi negoziati non dettero alcun risultato apprezzabile. Tutti gli sforzi del Governo Reale furono frustrati dalla resistenza del Governo Imperiale e Reale, il quale dopo parecchi mesi soltanto si decise a riconoscere gl'interessi speciali dell'Italia su Vallona e a promettere un'insufficiente concessione di territori nel Trentino, concessione che non garantiva in verun modo nè dal punto di vista politico, nè dal punto di vista militare l'andamento normale della situazione. Inoltre la detta concessione non doveva avere la sua esecuzione che ad un'epoca indeterminata, vale a dire alla fine della guerra.

In tale stato di cose il Governo italiano deve rinunziare alla speranza di pervenire ad un accordo, e si vede costretto a ritirare tutte le sue proposte d'accomodamento.

È inutile mantenere all'alleanza un'apparenza formale, la quale non sarebbe destinata che a dissimulare la realtà d'una sfiducia continua e di contrasti quotidiani.

È per questo che l'Italia, fiduciosa nel suo buon diritto, afferma e proclama ch'essa riprende fin da ora la sua piena libertà d'azione, come fin da ora e per sempre dichiara nullo e privo d'effetti il trattato d'alleanza con l'Austria-Ungheria.

SONNINO.

XI

Antonio Salandra presidente del Consiglio dei ministri d'Italia, nella storica seduta del Parlamento nazionale a Roma (20 maggio 1915), espone le ragioni per le quali il governo italiano è costretto a dichiarare guerra all'Austria.

Il 20 maggio 1915, nella storica seduta del Parlamento nazionale italiano a Roma, Antonio Salandra, primo ministro del Regno d'Italia, presentando un disegno di leggi "per il conferimento al Governo del Re di poteri straordinari in caso di guerra", pronunciava il seguente discorso:

Onorevoli Colleghi!

Sin da quando risorse ad unità di Stato, l'Italia si affermò, nel mondo delle nazioni, quale fattore di moderazione, di concordia e di pace; e fieramente essa può proclamare d'avere adempiuto a tale missione con una fermezza che non s'è piegata neppure dinanzi ai più penosi sacrifici.

Nell'ultimo periodo più che trentenne, essa ha mantenuto un sistema di alleanze e di amicizie, dominata precipuamente dall'intento di meglio assicurare per tal modo l'equilibrio europeo e, con esso, la pace.

Per la nobiltà di quel fine, l'Italia non soltanto ha tollerato l'insicurezza delle sue frontiere, non soltanto ha subordinato ad esso le sue più sacre aspirazioni nazionali, ma ha dovuto assistere, con represso dolore, ai tentativi metodicamente condotti di sopprimere quei caratteri d'italianità che la natura e la storia avevano impresso, indelebili, su generose regioni.

L'*ultimatum* che nel luglio 1914 l'Impero austro-ungarico dirigeva alla Serbia, annullava d'un colpo gli effetti del lungo sforzo durato, violando il patto che a quello Stato ci legava. Lo violava per il modo, avendo omesso, non che il preventivo accordo con noi, persino un semplice avvertimento; lo violava per la sostanza, mirando a turbare, in danno nostro, il delicato sistema di possessi territoriali e di sfere di influenza che s'era costituito nella penisola balcanica.

Ma più ancóra che questo o quel punto particolare, era tutto lo spirito animatore del trattato che veniva offeso, anzi soppresso;

giacchè, scatenando pel mondo la più terribile guerra in contrasto coi nostri sentimenti e coi nostri interessi, si distruggeva l'equilibrio che l'alleanza doveva servire ad assicurare; e, virtualmente, ma irresistibilmente, risorgeva il problema della integrazione nazionale d'Italia.

Pur nondimeno per lunghi mesi il Governo del Re d'Italia s'è pazientemente adoperato nel cercare un componimento il quale restituisse all'accordo la ragion d'essere che aveva perduta; quelle trattative, però, dovevano avere limiti non solo di tempo ma di dignità, al di là dei quali si sarebbero compromessi, insieme, gl'interessi e il decoro del nostro paese.

Per la tutela, dunque, di tali supreme ragioni, il Governo del Re d'Italia si vide costretto a notificare al Governo Imperiale e Reale d'Austria-Ungheria, il giorno 4 di questo mese di maggio 1915, il ritiro d'ogni sua proposta d'accordo, la denunzia del trattato d'alleanza e la dichiarazione della propria libertà d'azione. Nè, d'altra parte, era più possibile lasciare l'Italia in un isolamento senza sicurtà e senza prestigio, proprio nel momento in cui la storia del mondo sta attraversando una fase decisiva.

Ora, nel nome della Patria e per la devozione ad essa, noi fervidamente rivolgiamo il più commosso appello al Parlamento e al Paese: che tutti i dissensi si compongano e che su di essi, da tutte le parti, sinceramente discenda l'oblio.

I contrasti di partiti e di classi, le opinioni individuali, in tempi ordinari rispettabili sempre, le ragioni stesse, insomma, che dàn vita al quotidiano fecondo contrasto di tendenze e di princípi, debbono oggi sparire di fronte a una necessità che supera ogni altra necessità, a un'idealità che infiamma più d'ogni altra idealità: la fortuna e la grandezza d'Italia.

Ogni altra cosa dobbiamo da oggi dimenticare, e ricordar questa sola: di essere tutti Italiani, di amar tutti l'Italia con la medesima fede e con il medesimo fervore. Le forze di tutti s'integrino in una forza sola; i cuori di tutti si rinsaldino in un sol cuore; una sola unanime volontà guidi verso la meta invocata; e forza e cuore e volontà trovino la loro espressione — una, viva ed eroica — nell'esercito e nell'armata d'Italia e nel Capo Augusto che li conduce verso i destini della nuova storia.

XII

La dichiarazione di guerra del governo d'Italia all'impero austro-ungarico (23 maggio 1915).

Il 23 maggio 1915 il governo di Vittorio Emanuele III re d'Italia, incitato, anzi costretto dalla grande maggioranza della nazione (quasi i nove decimi), presentava, per mezzo del duca d'Avarna ambasciatore italiano a Vienna, la seguente dichiarazione di guerra al ministro degli affari esteri d'Austria-Ungheria:

Vienna, 23 maggio 1915.

Secondo le istruzioni ricevute da Sua Maestà il Re, mio augusto Sovrano, io qui sottoscritto ho l'onore di partecipare a Sua Eccellenza il Ministro degli Esteri d'Austria-Ungheria la seguente dichiarazione:

Già il 4 del mese di maggio 1915 vennero comunicati al Governo Imperiale e Reale i motivi per i quali l'Italia, fiduciosa nel suo buon diritto, ha considerato decaduto il trattato d'alleanza con l'Austria-Ungheria violato dal Governo Imperiale e Reale, lo ha dichiarato per l'avvenire nullo e senz'effetto, ed ha ripreso la sua libertà d'azione.

Il Governo del Re, fermamente deciso di assicurare con tutti i mezzi a sua disposizione la difesa dei diritti e degli interessi italiani, non trascurerà il suo dovere di prendere contro qualunque minaccia presente e futura quelle misure che vengano imposte dagli avvenimenti per realizzare le aspirazioni nazionali.

Sua Maestà il Re dichiara che l'Italia si considera in istato di guerra con l'Austria-Ungheria da domani (24 maggio 1915).

Io qui sottoscritto ho l'onore di comunicare nello stesso tempo a Sua Eccellenza il Ministro degli Esteri austro-ungarico che i passaporti vengono oggi consegnati all'ambasciatore imperiale e reale a Roma.

Sarò grato se vorrà provvedere a farmi consegnare i miei.

Il Duca d'Avarna.

XIII

L'imperatore Francesco Giuseppe, in un proclama diretto ai suoi popoli il 24 maggio 1915, accusa di tradimento Vittorio Emanuele III re d'Italia.

Il giorno dopo — 24 maggio 1915 — l'imperatore austro-ungarico Francesco Giuseppe pubblicava il seguente proclama:

Ai miei popoli.

Il Re d'Italia ci ha dichiarato la guerra. Un tradimento quale la storia non conosce fu compiuto dal Re d'Italia contro i suoi due alleati. Dopo un'alleanza d'oltre trent'anni, durante la quale l'Italia potè ampliare il suo territorio e spiegare un'impensata fortuna di sviluppo, l'Italia ci abbandona e passa a bandiera spiegata nel campo nemico.

Noi non minacciammo l'Italia, non diminuimmo il suo prestigio, non intaccammo nè i suoi beni nè i suoi interessi; osservammo sempre i nostri doveri d'alleata e le accordammo la nostra difesa quando andò in guerra. Facemmo di più: quando l'Italia rivolse i suoi cupidi sguardi sopra i nostri confini, ci decidemmo, per mantenere la pace e l'alleanza, a grandi e dolorosi sacrifici che riuscivano particolarmente penosi al nostro cuore paterno. Ma l'avidità italiana, che credeva di dovere sfruttare il momento, fu insaziabile. Si compia dunque il destino.

Le mie armate, in fedele fratellanza d'armi con quelle del mio altissimo alleato, hanno sostenuto vittoriosamente una gigantesca lotta di dieci mesi col potente nemico dell'Est.

Il nuovo perfido nemico del Sud non è un avversario nuovo. I grandi ricordi di Novara, Mortara, Custoza, Lissa, che formano l'orgoglio della mia gioventù; lo spirito di Radetzky, dell'arciduca Alberto e di Tegetthoff[1] che vive nel mio esercito e nella mia armata, mi garantiscono che sapremo difendere con successo anche a sud i confini della Monarchia.

Saluto le mie truppe provate alla vittoria e i loro capi, con fiducia che il mio popolo, al cui mirabile spirito di sacrificio devo la mia profonda gratitudine, preghi l'Altissimo perchè benedica la nostra bandiera e prenda sotto la sua protezione la nostra giusta causa.

FRANCESCO GIUSEPPE.

[1] L'ammiraglio austriaco che a Lissa (20 luglio 1866) vinse la flotta italiana.

XIV

Il " violento e menzognero " discorso pronunziato dal cancelliere germanico Bethmann-Hollweg contro l'Italia al Reichstag di Berlino il 28 maggio 1915.

Il cancelliere germanico Bethmann-Hollweg, nella seduta del 28 maggio 1915 al Reichstag di Berlino, pronunziò il seguente discorso:

Quando otto giorni or sono presi la parola, esisteva ancóra la speranza che sarebbe stato possibile evitare la guerra dell'Italia. La speranza rimase delusa; ci si rifiutava di credere in Germania alla sola possibilità di un tale cambiamento di rotta. Oggi il Governo Italiano ha scritto per sempre nel libro della storia dei popoli a lettere di sangue il suo atto sleale.

Fu, credo, Machiavelli il quale disse un giorno che una guerra necessaria è anche una guerra giusta; ora questa guerra dell'Italia, considerata dal punto di vista puramente realista, facendo astrazione da ogni preoccupazione morale, è essa necessaria? Non è essa, piuttosto, insensata?

Nessuno, nè in Austria nè in Germania, minacciava l'Italia. La storia dirà più tardi se questa si è lasciata sedurre dalle belle promesse dell'Intesa. L'Italia poteva ottenere una serie di concessioni, delle quali ho dato recentemente notizia: i territori del Tirolo e dell'Isonzo ove si parla italiano, l'accoglimento delle rivendicazioni italiane a Trieste, mani libere in Albania, il porto di grande valore di Vallona.

Perchè l'Italia non accettò tali offerte? Pretende essa di conquistare il Tirolo? Allora abbasso le mani! Desidera essa di urtarsi con la Germania, la quale tanto fece per elevarla al grado di grande Potenza e dalla quale non è separata da alcuna discordanza d'interessi? Non ho lasciato sussistere al Reichstag nessun dubbio a tale riguardo: un attacco italiano contro le truppe austro-ungariche si sarebbe urtato egualmente contro le truppe tedesche.

Perchè l'Italia respinse le proposte austriache? Il manifesto italiano pubblicato in occasione della dichiarazione di guerra, in cui la cattiva coscienza viene dissimulata sotto frasi vuote, non dà alcuna spiegazione. Si è forse imbarazzati a dichiarare apertamente ciò che si diceva nelle conversazioni dei circoli parlamen-

tari, e cioè che le offerte austriache furono fatte troppo tardi e non si doveva fidarsene? Che vuol dire ciò in realtà? Gli uomini di Stato italiani non avevano alcun diritto di accordare la loro fiducia alla lealtà della nostra Nazione, soltanto nella misura della loro fedeltà ai trattati. La Germania dette la sua parola che le concessioni austriache sarebbero state realizzate, perciò non era il caso di diffidare. Perchè troppo tardi? Il 4 maggio 1915 il Trentino non aveva cessato di essere ciò che era per l'innanzi, e al Trentino venne ad aggiungersi tutta una serie di concessioni alle quali non si era pensato nell'inverno. Se era troppo tardi, non era piuttosto perchè gli uomini di Stato romani non avevano avuto timore, molto tempo prima, mentre la Triplice Alleanza esisteva ancóra — alleanza di cui il re e il governo d'Italia avevano formalmente riconosciuto l'esistenza anche dopo lo scoppio della guerra—di compromettersi così gravemente con le Potenze della Triplice Intesa da non potersi più liberare dalla stretta? Già fin dal dicembre 1914 si poterono constatare gl'indizî del cambiamento del Gabinetto romano, perchè è sempre utile avere il ferro nel fuoco. Del resto l'Italia non ha mai cessato, anche tempo addietro, di dimostrare la sua predilezione per i giri di *valzer;* ma non c'è ora una sala da ballo, c'è un sanguinoso campo di battaglia in cui la Germania e l'Austria-Ungheria lottano per la vita contro un mondo di nemici. Gli uomini di Stato italiani giocarono contro il loro popolo lo stesso gioco che contro di noi.

Indubbiamente il paese di lingua italiana situato alla frontiera del nord era oggetto dei sogni e dei desiderî di ogni italiano; ma il popolo, nella sua grande maggioranza, e la maggioranza parlamentare von volevano saperne affatto della guerra. Durante i primi giorni di maggio del 1915, secondo le osservazioni del migliore conoscitore delle cose italiane, il Senato (4 maggio 1915) e la Camera dei deputati (12 maggio 1915), compresi gli uomini di Stato i più seri, erano ancóra contro la guerra.

Abbiamo fatto di tutto per impedire che l'Italia si distaccasse dall'alleanza. Per questo fine ci è toccato il cómpito ingrato di suggerire alla nostra fedele alleata, con gli eserciti della quale le nostre truppe condividono giornalmente morte e vittoria, di comprare la fedeltà della terza alleata, cedendole territori acquisiti da molto tempo. È noto che l'Austria andò fino all'estremo limite delle concessioni.

E il principe di Bulow, nuovamente al servizio attivo dell'Impero, mise in opera con instancabile energia tutta la sua abilità diplomatica e la sua conoscenza così precisa degli uomini e delle

cose in Italia per determinare l'accordo. Se anche il suo lavoro riuscì vano, il popolo intero gliene è riconoscente lo stesso.

XV

Antonio Salandra presidente dei ministri d'Italia, in un solenne discorso documentato, pronunziato nel Campidoglio a Roma il 2 giugno 1915, difende l'Italia dalle accuse dell'imperatore austro-ungarico e del cancelliere germanico.[1]

Il 2 giugno 1915 il primo ministro d'Italia, Antonio Salandra, pronunziò nel Campidoglio a Roma, nella grandiosa sala degli Orazi, il seguente memorabile discorso:

Occorre che della giustizia della nostra causa, della santità della nostra guerra gl'Italiani d'ogni ceto abbiano non solo, come meravigliosamente mostrano d'avere, la sensazione spontanea, istintiva, profonda, ma anche la persuasione ragionata. Occorre ne sia persuaso il mondo civile.

All'Italia e al mondo civile io mi rivolgo, per mostrare non con parole veementi, ma con fatti precisi e documentati, come la rabbia nemica abbia invano tentato di sminuire l'alta dignità morale e politica della causa che le nostre armi faranno prevalere.

Parlerò con la serena compostezza della quale ha dato nobilissimo esempio il Re d'Italia chiamando alle armi i suoi soldati di terra e di mare.[2] Parlerò come debbo, osservando il rispetto dovuto al mio grado e al luogo onde parlo. Potrò non curare le ingiurie scritte nei proclami imperiali, reali e arciducali. Poichè

[1] Questo discorso fu pubblicato nell'ottobre 1915 dai giornali nord-americani, ma mutilato e travisato in più parti, specialmente nella parte documentata.

[2] Vittorio Emanuele III re d'Italia, assumendo il comando supremo delle forze di terra e di mare, emanò il seguente ordine del giorno:

"Soldati di terra e di mare!

"L'ora solenne delle rivendicazioni nazionali è suonata.

"Seguendo l'esempio del mio Grande Avo, assumo oggi il comando supremo delle forze di terra e di mare, con sicura fede nella vittoria che il vostro valore, la vostra abnegazione, la vostra disciplina sapranno conseguire.

"Il nemico che vi accingete a combattere è agguerrito e degno di voi. Favorito dal terreno e dai sapienti apprestamenti dell'arte, egli vi opporrà tenace resistenza, ma il vostro imdomito slancio saprà, di certo, superarla.

"Soldati, a voi la gloria di piantare il tricolore d'Italia sui terreni sacri che natura pose ai confini della Patria nostra, a voi la gloria di compiere, finalmente, l'opera con tanto eroismo iniziata dai nostri padri.

"Gran Quartiere Generale, 26 maggio 1915.

"Vittorio Emanuele."

parlo dal Campidoglio e rappresento in quest'ora solenne il Popolo e il Governo d'Italia, io, modesto borghese, mi sento di gran lunga più nobile del capo degli Asburgo-Lorena.

I mediocri uomini di Stato, i quali con temeraria leggerezza, errando in tutte le loro previsioni, appiccarono nel luglio del 1914 il fuoco all'Europa intera e alle stesse loro case, accorgendosi ora del nuovo colossale errore, nei Parlamenti di Budapest e di Berlino si sono sfogati con brutali parole contro l'Italia e contro il suo Governo, col fine evidente di farsi perdonare dai loro concittadini, ubriacandoli con truci visioni di odio e di sangue. Il Cancelliere dell'Impero germanico disse essere egli compreso, se non di odio, di cóllera. E dovette dire il vero; poichè egli ragionò male, come si ragiona negli accessi di furore. Io non saprei, se anche volessi, imitare il loro linguaggio. Il ritorno atavistico alla barbarie primitiva è più difficile a noi che ne siamo di venti secoli più lontani.

Ma non badiamo alle parole; atteniamoci alle ragioni ed ai fatti.

La tesi fondamentale degli uomini di Stato degl'Imperi Centrali si racchiude nelle due parole *tradimento* e *sorpresa* rivolte all'Italia, tradimento e sorpresa verso i suoi *fedeli alleati.* Sarebbe facile domandare se abbia il diritto di parlare di alleanza e di rispetto ai trattati chi, rappresentando con tanta minor genialità di mente ma con uguale indifferenza morale la tradizione di Federico il Grande e di Ottone di Bismarck, ha proclamato che *necessità non ha legge*, ed ha acconsentito che il suo paese calpestasse, bruciasse, seppellisse in fondo all'Oceano tutti i documenti e tutte le civili consuetudini del diritto pubblico internazionale.

Ma sarebbe troppo facile e soltanto pregiudiziale argomento. Esaminiamo invece positivamente se gli alleati abbiano il diritto di dirsi traditi e sorpresi da noi.

Note da gran tempo erano le nostre aspirazioni, e noto era il nostro giudizio sopra l'atto di follia criminale pel quale essi — gli alleati — scompigliarono il mondo e tolsero all'alleanza stessa la sua íntima ragione d'essere.

Il *Libro Verde* preparato da Sidney Sonnino, che più d'ogni altro fascicolo di documenti diplomatici è penetrato nella coscienza del popolo italiano, dimostra le lunghissime penose trattative trascinatesi dal dicembre 1914 al maggio 1915. Ma non è vero, come artificiosamente si tenta far credere, che il Ministero, ricostituitosi nel novembre 1914, mutasse l'indirizzo della nostra politica internazionale.

Il Governo italiano, la cui linea di condotta non ha mai mutato, giudicò severamente, al momento stesso che ne ebbe conoscenza, l'aggressione dell'Austria alla Serbia, e ne previde le conseguenze non prevedute da coloro che con tanta incoscienza avevano premeditato il colpo.

Eccone la prova.

Leggerò, perchè si tratta di documenti.

Il 25 luglio 1914 (due giorni dopo che l'Austria aveva consegnato la famosa nota-*ultimatum* alla Serbia) il marchese di San Giuliano, ministro degli esteri del Regno d'Italia, telegrafava al duca d'Avarna ambasciatore italiano a Vienna come segue:

Oggi abbiamo avuto una lunga conversazione a tre — il Presidente del Consiglio dei ministri, il signor Flotow (ambasciatore germanico in Roma) ed io — che riassumo per informazione personale di Vostra Eccellenza e per eventuale norma di linguaggio.

Abbiamo — Salandra ed io — fatto notare anzitutto all'ambasciatore che l'Austria non avrebbe avuto il diritto, secondo lo spirito del trattato della Triplice Alleanza, di fare un passo come quello che ha fatto a Belgrado, senza previo accordo coi suoi alleati.

L'Austria infatti, pel modo come la Nota alla Serbia è concepita e per le cose che domanda, le quali, mentre sono poco efficaci contro il pericolo panserbo, sono profondamente offensive per la Serbia e indirettamente per la Russia, ha chiaramente dimostrato che vuole provocare una guerra. Abbiamo perciò detto al signor Flotow che, per tal modo di procedere dell'Austria e per il carattere difensivo e conservatore del trattato della Triplice Alleanza, l'Italia non ha obbligo di venire in aiuto dell'Austria in caso che, per effetto di questo suo passo, essa si trovi poi in guerra con la Russia, poichè qualsiasi guerra europea è in questo caso conseguenza di un atto di provocazione e di aggressione dell'Austria.

Poco dopo, il 27 o 28 luglio 1914, noi ponemmo a chiare note a Berlino e a Vienna la questione della cessione delle province italiane dell'Austria; e dichiarammo che se non si ottenessero adeguati compensi (leggo le testuali parole), *la Triplice Alleanza sarebbe stata irreparabilmente spezzata.*

La storia imparziale dirà che l'Austria, avendo trovata l'Italia ostile nel luglio 1913 e nell'ottobre dello stesso anno ai suoi propositi di aggressione alla Serbia, tentò l'estate scorsa (1914), d'accordo con la Germania, la via della sorpresa e del fatto compiuto.

L'esecrando delitto di Serajevo fu sfruttato come un pretesto un mese dopo ch'era stato compiuto. Lo prova il rifiuto austriaco di accettare le profferte remissive della Serbia. Nè al momento

della conflagrazione generale si sarebbe contentata l'Austria dell'accettazione integrale dell'*ultimatum*. Il 31 luglio 1914 il conte Berchtold (ministro degli esteri d'Austria-Ungheria) dichiarava al nostro ambasciatore a Vienna che, *ove la mediazione avesse potuto essere esercitata, non avrebbe dovuto fare interrompere le ostilità già iniziate con la Serbia.* Era la mediazione intorno a cui s'affaticavano l'Inghilterra e l'Italia. *In ogni caso il conte Berchtold non era disposto ad accettare la mediazione intesa ad attenuare le condizioni indicate nella Nota austro-ungarica, le quali non avrebbero potuto naturalmente che essere aumentate alla fine della guerra. D'altra parte, se la Serbia si fosse decisa nel frattempo di aderire senz'altro alla Nota suddetta, dichiarandosi pronta ad eseguire le condizioni impostele, ciò non avrebbe potuto indurre il Governo Imperiale e Reale a cessare le ostilità.*

E non è vero che l'Austria s'impegnasse, come ha detto il Presidente del Consiglio ungherese, a non compiere acquisti territoriali a danno della Serbia, la quale, del resto, accettando tutte le condizioni impostele, sarebbe diventata, se anche territorialmente integra, uno Stato vassallo.

Il 30 luglio 1914 l'ambasciatore austriaco in Roma, Merey, disse al marchese di San Giuliano le seguenti parole:

L'Austria non può fare una dichiarazione impegnativa al riguardo, perchè non può prevedere se, nel corso della guerra, non sarà obbligata, contro la sua volontà, a conservare dei territori serbi.

E il 29 luglio 1914 Berchtold aveva fatto intendere ad Avarna che non *sarebbe stato disposto a prendere impegno alcuno circa quanto gli aveva detto in ordine all'eventuale condotta dell'Austria nel caso di conflitto con la Serbia.*

Dov'è dunque il tradimento, dove l'iniquità, dove la sorpresa se, dopo nove mesi di sforzi vani per arrivare ad un'intesa onorevole la quale riconoscesse in equa misura i nostri diritti e tutelasse i nostri interessi, noi riprendemmo la nostra libertà d'azione e provvedemmo come l'interesse della Patria ci consigliava?

Sta invece in fatti che Austria e Germania credettero fino agli ultimi giorni di avere a fare con un'Italia imbelle, rumorosa ma non fattiva, capace di tentare un ricatto, non mai di far valere con le armi il suo buon diritto, con un'Italia che si potesse paralizzare spendendo qualche milione di lire e frapponendosi con inconfessabili raggiri fra il Paese e il Governo.

Sovrani e ministri hanno parlato dell'alleanza, che noi abbiamo denunciata dopo ch'essi sostanzialmente l'avevano infranta, come di una Provvidenza sotto le cui grandi ali l'Italia ha vissuto

per tanti anni, si è sviluppata economicamente e si è territorialmente accresciuta. Non negherò, sarebbe stoltezza, i benefici dell'alleanza; benefici però non unilaterali, ma di tutti i contraenti, e non forse più di noi che degli altri. Perchè, altrimenti, gl'Imperi Centrali l'avrebbero voluta e rinnovata? Era forse un sentimentale, un innamorato del bel paese dove fiorisce l'arancio, il principe Ottone di Bismarck? E furono forse in qualunque tempo teneri di noi i principi e gli uomini di governo della Monarchia austro-ungarica?

Giova sapere in realtà, e con precisione di date e di fatti, come abbia funzionato l'alleanza in questi ultimi anni nel suo spirito vero e come abbia contribuito al nostro unico ingrandimento territoriale che fu l'impresa di Libia.

Il continuo sospetto, le intenzioni aggressive della Monarchia austro-ungarica contro l'alleata sono notorie e risultano da prove autentiche.

Il capo dello stato maggiore austriaco generale Conrad ha sostenuto sempre il concetto che *la guerra contro l'Italia è inevitabile, sia per la questione delle province irredente, sia per la gelosia del Regno d'Italia al riguardo di tutto ciò che la Monarchia austro-ungarica intraprende nei Balcani e nel Mediterraneo orientale.*

E altrove:

L'Italia vuole estendersi non appena si sia preparata; e intanto si oppone a tutto ciò che noi vogliamo intraprendere nei Balcani. Ne consegue che bisogna batterla per aver noi le mani libere.

E deplorava che fin dal 1908 non si fosse attaccata l'Italia.[1]

Lo stesso Ministero austriaco degli affari esteri riconosceva che nel partito militare dell'Impero *era diffusa l'opinione che si debba opprimere in guerra il Regno d'Italia, perchè da questo viene la forza d'attrazione per le province italiane dell'Impero; e che quindi, con la vittoria sul Regno d'Italia e il suo annientamento politico, cesserebbe ogni speranza per gl'irredenti. Intanto, fino al momento della guerra, si dovrebbero opprimere le province italiane col rigore penale e con l'opporsi ad ogni desiderio riguardante le questioni di cultura.*[2]

[1] A piè d'una relazione sugli apparecchi militari al confine italo-austriaco, il suddetto generale Conrad scrisse:

"Oh, perchè non fui ascoltato quando propugnai di attaccare l'Italia nel 1908?"

In altri termini lo zelante capo dello stato maggiore austro-ungarico rimpiangeva l'opportunità di invadere l'Italia, che l'Austria s'era fatta sfuggire allorquando l'Italia fu colpita dall'orribile terremoto calabro-siculo della fine di dicembre del 1908!

[2] Il conte Berchtold riconobbe pur esso "la gravità del problema degl'Italiani dell'impero austriaco", ma affermò trattarsi di un male "senza rimedio". Invece *l'Armee Zeitung* confessò francamente che "bisognava distruggere quegl'Italiani

Da questo pensiero risulta evidente con quanta sincerità e buona fede sia stata trascinata per tanti anni la questione dell'Università italiana a Trieste!

Ed ora vediamo come gli alleati ci abbiano aiutato nell'acquisto della Libia.

Non dirò se non ciò che risulta da documenti.

Le operazioni brillantemente iniziate dal Duca degli Abruzzi contro le torpediniere turche raccolte a Prevesa furono arrestate dall'Austria in modo brusco e assoluto. Il conte Aehrenthal (allora ministro degli esteri d'Austria-Ungheria) significava il 1° ottobre 1911 al nostro ambasciatore a Vienna che *le nostre operazioni militari lo avevano penosamente impressionato e che non si poteva ammettere che esse continuassero; era urgente che vi fosse posto termine, e che ordini fossero dati per impedire che esse avvenissero di nuovo nelle acque sia dell'Adriatico sia dell'Ionio.*

Più minacciosamente ancóra il giorno dopo l'ambasciatore di Germania a Vienna informava confidenzialmente il nostro ambasciatore che Aehrenthal lo aveva pregato *di telegrafare al proprio Governo che facesse intendere al Governo italiano che se avesse continuato nelle sue operazioni navali nell'Adriatico e nell'Ionio, il Governo italiano avrebbe avuto a che fare direttamente con l'Austria.*[1]

E non soltanto nell'Adriatico e nell'Ionio l'Austria paralizzava la nostra azione. Il 5 novembre 1911 il conte Aehrenthal informava il duca D'Avarna di aver saputo che alcune navi da guerra italiane erano state segnalate nelle vicinanze di Salonicco, dove avrebbero proceduto a proiezioni a luce elettrica, e dichiarava *che una nostra azione sulle coste ottomane della Turchia europea, come sulle isole del Mare Egeo, non avrebbe potuto essere ammessa nè dall'Austria nè dalla Germania, perchè contraria al trattato della Triplice Alleanza.*

per supreme ragioni strategiche, per non trovarsi ad avere elementi infidi alle spalle nel giorno in cui l'Austria avesse dichiarato guerra all'Italia".

E dei preparativi di guerra dell'Austria contro l'Italia, non mai deprecati dalla Germania, fu recato un giorno alla Camera italiana in Roma un singolar documento, un manuale-vocabolario di dialoghi tedesco-italiani per uso dell'escercito austriaco, preordinato al piano d'invasione dell'Italia e garantito nella sua autenticità, non mai smentita dal governo di Vienna, dal bollo del Comando militare di Gratz.

Si provvedeva, nel detto manuale-vocabolario, alla traduzione delle domande di maggiore urgenza e utilità, per quando le truppe austriache avessero varcato i confini del Regno d'Italia.

"Qual'è l'animo dei soldati italiani? Sono essi altéri, baldanzosi, sfiduciati, tristi?"

"Dove sono chiusi i denari erariali? Dove stanno i depositi del grano, del vino, dei viveri?"

[1] Risultò perfino che il governo austriaco, per i pochi proiettili lanciati allora dalle siluranti del Duca degli Abruzzi contro Prevesa, mise le navi della propria squadra in pressione.

Nel marzo del 1912 Berchtold, succeduto frattanto ad Aehrenthal, dichiarava all'ambasciatore di Germania in Vienna che *per ciò che riguardava una nostra operazione contro le coste ottomane europee e le isole dell'Egeo, egli manteneva il punto di vista di Aehrenthal, secondo il quale quelle operazioni erano considerate dal Governo Imperiale e Reale contrarie agl'impegni da noi assunti con l'articolo 7 del trattato della Triplice Alleanza. Quanto alla nostra operazione contro i Dardanelli*[1], *egli la considerava in opposizione:* 1°. *alla promessa da noi fatta di non procedere ad alcun atto che potesse mettere a cimento lo* statu quo *dei Balcani;* 2°. *allo spirito stesso del trattato che si basava sul mantenimento di quello* statu quo.

Di poi, quando la nostra squadra, trovandosi all'imboccatura dei Dardanelli, veniva bombardata dai forti turchi di Kum Kalessi e rispondeva danneggiando i forti stessi, Berchtold si lamentò dell'accaduto, considerandolo in contradizione delle promesse fatte; e dichiarò che *se il Regio Governo italiano desiderava riprendere la sua libertà d'azione, il Governo Imperiale e Reale avrebbe potuto fare altrettanto.* Aggiunse che non avrebbe potuto ammettere che noi avessimo fatto in avvenire operazioni simili a quelle compiute, o in qualsiasi modo in opposizione al suo punto di vista.

Così pure ci fu impedita la disegnata occupazione di Chio.[2]

Non occorre rilevare quante vite di soldati italiani e quanti milioni di lire ci sia costato il persistente impedimento ad ogni nostra azione risolutiva contro la Turchia, la quale si sapeva protetta dalle nostre alleate contro ogni attacco alle sue parti vitali.[3]

[1] Allude ad alcune torpediniere italiane che riuscirono, in quell'anno 1912, a penetrare nello Stretto dei Dardanelli, compiendo un arditissimo *raid.*

[2] Isola turca nel Mare Egeo.

[3] E nelle conferenze diplomatiche di Londra per la guerra della Lega Balcanica contro la Turchia (1912–1913), l'Austria, "traendo" seco l'Italia, "impose" l'esclusione del Montenegro dalla conquistata Scutari e la creazione di quella Albania autonoma e indipendente, dove, nelle rispettive zone d'influenza — a Durazzo l'Austria, a Vallona l'Italia — le due Potenze alleate credevasi avrebbero trovato il modo di soddisfare e far tacere alcune cause della loro innegabile fatale rivalità. Senonchè le incessanti trattative fra l'Austria e l'Italia diedero ripetutamente la sensazione della scarsa sincerità dell'Austria verso l'Italia, specialmente da quando, nel marzo 1914, fu insediato sul trono della nuova Albania il tedesco principe Guglielmo di Wied, attorno al quale, non v'ha dubbio, l'Austria creò tutto un lavorío d'intrigo cattolico-austrofilo-antitaliano, che non fu l'ultima causa di quella pertinace ribellione degli elementi albanesi-musulmani guardanti (naturale reazione) con simpatia all'influenza italiana, onde si vide, nel settembre 1914, dileguarsi, tra il turbinío della più grande guerra, l'effimera sovranità del principe piovuto in Albania dalla Germania.

La lotta austriaca nell'Albania mirava a fare della costa albanese una barriera impenetrabile ai traffici italiani verso l'Oreinte.

E a tutto il Mediterraneo italiano s'estesero l'invidia e la gara.

Così quando, d'accordo coll'Inghilterra, l'Italia ottenne nell'Asia Minore —

Un altro rimprovero che ci è stato amaramente fatto è di non esserci accontentati delle *prodigiose* concessioni le quali ci furono offerte in questi ultimi tempi.

Anzitutto si potrebbe domandare: Queste concessioni erano offerte in buona fede? Il sospetto nasce leggendo gli ultimi documenti.

L'imperatore Francesco Giuseppe ha detto che l'Italia guardava con cupidi sguardi verso il patrimonio della sua Casa.

Il cancelliere Bethmann-Hollweg ha detto che con queste concessioni s'intendeva *comperare la nostra fedeltà*. E allora, o signori, applauditeci per non averle accettate.

Ma guardiamo tuttavia alla sostanza delle cose. Queste concessioni, pur movendo dall'ultima tardiva edizione che pervenne nelle mani del Ministro degli Esteri e mie dopo ch'era stata tra le mani di uomini politici e di giornalisti di varia provenienza . . . , queste tardive concessioni, se pure le avessimo potuto accettare per buone, non rispondevano in alcun modo agli obiettivi che la politica italiana doveva proporsi.

Tali obiettivi possono ridursi a tre: 1°. la difesa dell'italianità, il maggiore nostro dovere; 2°. un confine militare sicuro, che sostituisse quello che nel 1866 ci fu imposto e per il quale le porte e le sponde d'Italia sono aperte ai nostri avversari; 3°. una posizione strategica nell'Adriatico meno malsicura, meno infelice di quella che abbiamo e di cui si vedono in questi giorni gli effetti.

Tutti questi vantaggi, per noi essenziali, ci erano sostanzialmente negati.

L'offerta, a grado a grado accresciuta, del Trentino, non arrivava, non è mai arrivata, all'Alto Adige, ed escludeva l'Ampezzano, quella Cortina in cui i nostri soldati sono ora gloriosamente giunti, nonchè la parte superiore, indubbiamente italiana, della Val di Non, col pretesto per l'Ampezzano che si trattasse non di genti italiane ma di genti ladine: come se la differenza fra ladini e italiani non fosse infinitamente minore che fra ladini e tedeschi. E noi non vi aspiravamo per l'importanza di quei territori, ma perchè col confine segnatoci dall'Austria, in cui potere sarebbero rimaste le testate delle valli, avremmo avuto, come prima, aperte le porte di casa nostra.[1]

a Adalia — una concessione ferroviaria, gli spettri degli alleati la seguirono. Ciascuno di essi secondo il suo metodo: l'Austria, che non ci aveva pensato mai, reclamò una zona accanto a quella dove avea da sorgere la ferrovia italiana; e la Germania s'affrettò a mandarvi gli agenti della *Deutsche Bank*, i quali, col pretesto di vendere macchine agricole, cercarono d'accaparrarsi essi i terreni attraverso i quali doveva correre la linea ferroviaria italiana.

[1] A proposito del nuovo confine offerto dal governo austriaco all'Italia, il professor Gino Fani del Politecnico di Torino fece notare, in una sua conferenza, come

Nel *Libro Verde* si può leggere un ingenuo documento austriaco in cui si dice press'a poco: *No, questo non possiamo darvelo, perchè ci guasterebbe il confine militare.* Ma non si trattava di un confine militare di difesa per l'Austria, nel qual caso sarebbe stata giusta la pretesa di non lasciarsi aperta la porta di casa sua, bensì di un confine militare di offesa per l'Italia, perchè si trattava — lo ripeto — di lasciare aperte le porte di casa nostra.

Sull'Adriatico nessuna concessione ci fu mai offerta, neanche all'ultimo. E quando noi, col pianto nell'anima, ma pensando che ogni massimo sforzo si dovesse fare per evitare la guerra, ci piegammo a chiedere come minimo che Trieste e una zona circostante fossero considerate non parte del Regno d'Italia, ma non più parte dell'Impero austriaco e fossero costituite a Stato libero, questo ci fu negato, e a Trieste si promise che cosa? l'autonomia amministrativa!

Un altro punto importantissimo della questione dibattuta fu quello della esecuzione.

Io penso che cosa avreste detto voi, voi Italiani, che cosa avrebbe detto il nostro Parlamento se noi, uomini di governo, ci fossimo presentati annunziando che eravamo in pieno accordo con l'Austria-Ungheria, che avremmo avuto una parte del Trentino e qualche altro piccolo lembo di terra non oltre l'Isonzo, ma a pace compiuta. La pace compiuta, poi, si attenuò con l'offerta, nell'ultimissimo giorno, della nomina di commissioni miste le quali avrebbero studiato il confine, dopo di che sarebbero venute le ratifiche; e dopo, entro un mese da queste, si sarebbero occupati i territori. Quanto tempo e quanti probabili cavilli nell'esaurimento di questa procedura!

Ma ci si oppone che dell'esecuzione non avremmo dovuto dubitare, perchè ci sarebbe stata la guarentigia della Germania.

Supponiamo questa guarentigia data con perfetta intenzione di dimostrarla efficace. Supponiamo che la Germania alla fine della guerra sarebbe stata in condizione di poter mantenere la parola data, ciò che non è sicuro; quale sarebbe stata la nostra

"questa nuova ed insidiosa frontiera costituiva una linea convenzionale che lasciava sempre all'Austria le teste delle nostre valli e quindi la possibilità d'un'invasione del nostro territorio con nessuna possibilità di difesa quando fosse avvenuta improvvisa (l'invasione) e, comunque, difficilissima in qualsiasi momento. Infatti le teste delle valli di Non, Avisio, Cordevole e Boite, nonchè la grande strada delle Dolomiti (Bolzano-Lago), sarebbero rimaste in mano dell'Austria, per modo che, mentre avremmo guadagnato qualche nucleo di popolazione italiana, lasciando sempre fuori dalla madre patria altri importanti nuclei italiani, dal lato politico e strategico nulla avremmo certo guadagnato.

"Cosicchè l'accettazione, mentre costituiva una definitiva rinuncia, continuava a metterci alla mercè della nostra vicina, e aggravava la nostra soggezione."

condizione dopo questo accordo? Si sarebbe costituita una nuova Triplice, una Triplice rinnovata, ma in ben altre e per noi inferiori condizioni da quella di prima, poichè sarebbe stata formata da uno Stato sovrano e da due Stati sostanzialmente vassalli.

Il giorno in cui una delle clausole del trattato non fosse stata eseguita, il giorno in cui, dopo breve tempo, dopo anni, l'autonomia municipale di Trieste fosse stata infranta da un qualsiasi decreto imperiale o da un qualsiasi luogotenente austriaco, a chi avremmo potuto rivolgerci? Avremmo dovuto ricorrere al comune superiore, alla Germania.

Ora, Signori, io voglio dirvi che della Germania non intendo parlare senza ammirazione e senza rispetto. Io sono Primo Ministro d'Italia, non Cancelliere tedesco, e non perdo il lume della ragione. Ma, con tutto il rispetto dovuto alla dotta, alla potente, alla grande Germania, mirabile esempio di organizzazione e di resistenza, in nome del mio Paese debbo dire: vassallaggio no, protettorato no, verso nessuno.

Il sogno dell'egemonia universale è stato infranto. Il mondo è insorto. La pace e la civiltà dell'umanità futura debbono fondarsi sul rispetto delle compiute autonomie nazionali, tra le quali la grande Germania dovrà vivere pari alle altre, non padrona.

Ma il più notevole esempio dell'orgoglio smisurato con cui gli uomini che dirigono la politica dell'Impero germanico considerano le altre nazioni, si trae dal quadro che il cancelliere Bethmann-Hollweg ha fatto del mondo politico italiano. Voglio leggerlo in un riassunto più completo di quello che fu dato dai giornali, in un riassunto arrivato il giorno dopo. Ecco che cosa il Cancelliere germanico disse di noi:

Gli uomini di Stato italiani fecero contro il loro popolo il medesimo giuoco che contro di noi. Senza dubbio il possesso di territori di lingua italiana al nord delle sue frontiere era oggetto dei sogni e dei desiderî d'ogni italiano. Ma il fatto è che gran parte del popolo italiano e la maggioranza del Parlamento non volevano saperne della guerra.

Nei primi giorni di maggio (1915), *secondo le osservazioni del miglior conoscitore delle cose italiane, i quattro quinti del Senato e i due terzi della Camera erano ancóra contro la guerra.*

Tra essi si trovavano gli uomini di Stato più seri ed autorevoli. Ma la voce del buon senso non era più ascoltata; soltanto la plebaglia regnava.

Con la benevola tolleranza e l'appoggio dei principali membri di

un Gabinetto rimpinzato d'oro dalla Triplice Intesa, il popolaccio, guidato da agenti provocatori senza scrupoli, fu spinto a frenesia sanguinaria, minacciando al Re la rivoluzione e a tutti i moderati l'assassinio, se non si fossero abbandonati al delirio della guerra.

Si lasciò, per deliberato proposito, ignorare al popolo italiano l'andamento dei negoziati italiani con l'Austria e la portata delle concessioni austriache, di guisa che, dopo le dimissioni del Gabinetto Salandra, non si trovò alcuno che avesse il coraggio di accettare e di formare un nuovo Gabinetto; e nel corso delle discussioni decisive nessun membro dei partiti costituzionali del Senato e della Camera tentò neppure di apprezzare il valore delle concessioni così estese dell'Austria. In questa frenesia di guerra, onesti uomini politici divennero muti. Ma quando, nel séguito delle operazioni militari, come noi speriamo e desideriamo, il popolo italiano sarà rientrato nel buon senso, riconoscerà quanto leggermente sia stato spinto a partecipare a questa guerra mondiale.

Io non so, Signori, se vi sia stata in quest'uomo (Bethmann-Hollweg), accecato dalla rabbia, intenzione di offendere personalmente i colleghi miei e me. Se così fosse, non lo rileverei. Uomini noi siamo di cui conoscete il passato, uomini che hanno servito lo Stato fino a questa tarda età, uomini di fama incontaminata, uomini che dánno al paese la vita dei loro figli. Ma non pensate a noi. Ponete mente invece all'ingiuria atroce che quel brano di prosa vandalica scaglia contro il Re, contro il popolo d'Italia, contro la Camera e il Senato, contro gli stessi uomini politici che avevano un'opinione politica diversa dalla nostra. Tutti muti, si disse: dunque tutti vili.

Le informazioni sulle quali questo giudizio è fondato, sono attribuite dal Cancelliere dell'Impero germanico a quegli che egli chiama *il miglior conoscitore delle cose italiane.* Forse allude, con fraterno desiderio di addossargliene la responsabilità, al principe di Bulow.

Ora, o Signori, io voglio che delle intenzioni del principe di Bulow voi non abbiate un erroneo apprezzamento: Io credo che, animato da vera simpatia per il nostro Paese, egli abbia fatto tutto quello che poteva per riuscire ad un'intesa. Ma quali e quanti errori nel tradurre in atto le sue buone intenzioni! Egli suppose che l'Italia potesse sviarsi dalla sua rotta per qualche milione di lire male speso, per l'influenza di poche persone che hanno perso la percezione dell'anima nazionale, per obliqui contatti tentati, ma spero e credo non riusciti, con uomini politici italiani.

Ne derivò l'effetto opposto. Un immenso scoppio d'indigna-

zione si accese in tutta l'Italia, e non nel popolaccio, ma nelle classi veramente più elevate, nei cuori più nobili, in tutti coloro che sentono la dignità della Nazione, nella gioventù che è pronta a dare all'idealità della Patria il suo purissimo sangue; uno scoppio di indignazione si accese al sospetto che un'Ambasciata straniera in Roma si inframmettesse tra Governo, Parlamento e Paese.

In questo fuoco si fusero le discordie interne, e la Nazione tutta si rinsaldò in una meravigliosa unità morale che sarà la nostra massima forza nel duro cimento e che deve condurci, per virtù nostra, non per altrui benevola concessione, alla effettuazione dei più alti destini della Patria.

PARTE QUARTA

I

Prima ragione: Patriottismo.

I fatti narrati nella prima parte di questo lavoro sono il compendio di ciò che ufficialmente si chiama *Storia del Risorgimento Italiano*. A eccezione dell'episodio di Balilla, che si può considerare, a rigor di logica, come il preludio di detta storia.

Solo nella forma essi — i fatti in parola — differiscono più o meno da quelli narrati da altri scrittori. E ciò è naturale, non essendo la forma, massime nelle narrazioni storiche, se non una riflessa qualità dell'individuo che scrive; qualità derivante da un complesso di cause puramente letterarie, estetiche. La sostanza è perfettamente identica. Ed è anche naturale che sia così, non potendo la diversità della forma, per quanto áulica o ribelle, alterare in verun modo gli elementi positivi dei fatti, il lor dinamico substrato morale, quella *veritas* che regola, sovrastando sempre, tutte le manifestazioni dell'umano pensiero, tutti i doveri dell'umana coscienza.

Ora, tali fatti, nella loro suggestiva eloquenza, furono sempre, dal 1870 in poi, insegnati obbligatoriamente nelle scuole d'Italia, giusta i programmi governativi. Furono sempre rievocati da un'intera letteratura nazionalista stendentesi fino al giornale quotidiano. Furono sempre commemorati davanti ai monumenti eretti nelle grandi e nelle piccole città italiane ai martiri e agli eroi delle rivoluzioni e delle guerre liberatrici provocate in Italia dalla crudele dominazione austriaca. Furono sempre rappresentati dalle cicatrici, dai ricordi aneddotici, dal patrio entusiasmo dei veterani ancóra sopravviventi. Furono sempre il cibo spirituale — preponderante, se non unico — di quelle idealità che nutrirono e tennero costantemente sátura e vibrante di sè l'intera penisola nella sua risorta unità politica.

E questo cúmulo di cose, dalle pulsazioni ritmiche incessanti, non poteva che rattizzare e tenére permanentemente acceso, in un popolo passionato come l'italiano, l'odio d'una volta contro l'Austria. Non poteva che irrigoglire, anche negli animi i più francescani, la mala pianta del patriottismo vendicativo militarista feroce. La mala pianta che non può produrre se non un solo frutto: quello amarissimo e tristissimo della guerra.

È vero che Giordano Bruno affermò essere egli un cittadino del mondo, figlio della madre Terra e del padre Sole.

È vero che Tommaso Campanella dimostrò essere impossibile la pace, il buon essere, la felicità senza la repubblica universale.

È vero che lo stesso Mazzini e lo stesso Garibaldi lottarono, attraverso un sano principio di nazionalità, per la fratellanza di tutti i popoli.

Ma al pensiero e all'azione di questi sommi Italiani, le caste privilegiate ebbero cura di contrapporre sempre — teoricamente e praticamente, a mezzo dei loro asserviti governi dinastici e non dinastici — l'egoistico vecchio assioma *dívide et ímpera.*

Sì che i popoli, accecati dall'astuzia e abbrutiti dalla perfidia di siffatte idre parassite, non poterono mai vedere la luce diffusa dagli apostoli della verità; non poterono mai assimilare gli elementi rigeneratori profusi dagli apostoli della civiltà; non poterono mai liberarsi da quell'errore cancrenoso che è il falso patriottismo suaccennato, causa fondamentale di tutte le calamità, di tutti i dolori che opprimono, oggi più che mai, la povera umanità.

Nelle scuole delle differenti nazioni (dico nelle scuole, poichè ivi si plasma la coscienza dei futuri cittadini del mondo), la storia delle guerre aggressive e delle dominazioni straniere si dovrebbe insegnare con metodi rigorosamente compendiosi e oggettivi. Si dovrebbero, cioè, eliminare dall'insegnamento storico non solo i dettagli di fatto descriventi le mostruosità commesse dagli aggressori e dai dominatori, ma anche i commenti esecranti tali mostruosità e magnificanti gli eroismi, i sacrifici, le magnanimità compiuti dai popoli conquistati e tiranneggiati.

Parlando, per esempio, delle *Cinque Giornate di Milano*, i libri di testo e i maestri dovrebbero semplicemente dire: "Nel 1848 i Milanesi si ribellarono ai loro dominatori (gli Austriaci): e, dopo cinque giorni di lotta, li scacciarono dalla città".

Così nelle anime sensibili, quanto candide, degli alunni non si porrebbero i semi velenosi che generano le nemicizie per cui "l'uomo è poi lupo all'altro uomo", come dice Orazio.

I dettagli di fatto (per esempio: "i soldati austriaci, durante le cinque giornate di Milano, infilzarono bambini vivi alle baionette, ne inchiodarono ai muri, tagliarono e intascarono mani inanellate di donne morte") bisognerebbe lasciarli agli adulti, nei quali l'abito dello studio ha già eliminato, o per lo meno attutito, l'esiziale eccitabilità delle basse passioni; agli adulti, nei quali il processo evolutivo della mente ha già sviluppato al massimo grado, o ad un alto grado, il senso della ragione e il suo più nobile derivato: l'amore. L'amore per il prossimo.

Si principierebbe in tal modo a curare la maledetta frenesia della guerra.

E non sarebbe poco!

II

Seconda ragione: Irredentismo.

I fatti, quasi tutti documentati, esposti nella seconda parte del presente volume, basterebbero da soli a giustificare l'entrata dell'Italia nella grande guerra.

Si trattava, da parte degl'Italiani, di liberare migliaia di fratelli consanguinei oppressi in casa propria — vale a dire su suolo geograficamente, storicamente, moralmente italiano — da una tirannide straniera che l'Italia ben conosceva; migliaia di fratelli consanguinei che, lottando lottando lottando contro siffatta tirannide, sempre avevano anelato e implorato di ritornare nel grembo della primigénia madre latina.

Si trattava, da parte degl'Italiani, di completare, a

nord-est della loro penisola, l'unità nazionale secondo la legge di Roma, secondo la legge autorevolmente riaffermata, anzi eternata, dall'Alighieri nella sua *Divina Commedia* (Inferno, canto IX).

a Pola presso del Quarnero,
che Italia chiude e i suoi termini bagna.

Si trattava, da parte degl'Italiani, d'adempiere una buona volta a un sacro dovere d'amore e d'onore troppo a lungo protratto.

L'Italia non avrebbe mai potuto, senza rischio della propria integrità territoriale e peggio, attaccare da sola l'Austria, superiore a lei in numero d'abitanti, in ricchezza, in preparazione militare e per il sicuro spalleggiamento della Germania.

L'Italia dovè attaccare la nemica, soltanto quando questa si trovò impegnata a fondo nella grande guerra. Dovè attaccarla nel momento propizio, quando la fatalità storica volle che il martirologio secolare sintetizzato nel binomio *Trento e Trieste* entrasse, alfine, nella sua naturale fase risolutiva.

Chi oserebbe dare torto al popolo italiano?

Chi oserebbe dire ch'esso, attaccando l'Austria nella primavera del 1915, abbia, dal punto di vista patriotticamente irredentista, cimentato ingiustamente il proprio sangue?

III

Terza ragione: Una visita non restituita.

L'imperatore Francesco Giuseppe non restituì mai la visita che i reali d'Italia — Umberto I e Margherita di Savoia — gli fecero ufficialmente a Vienna nel 1881.

Perchè?

Perchè egli avrebbe dovuto recarsi a Roma, dove Umberto I e Margherita risiedevano.

Ora, Roma non fu mai riconosciuta dal Vaticano come conquista intangibile e tanto meno come capitale legittima del Regno d'Italia.

La presa della città eterna (20 settembre 1870), da parte dei soldati della nuova Italia, fu dal Vaticano considerata sempre com'un'usurpazione violenta e sacrilega. E usurpatore sacrilego fu dallo stesso Vaticano considerato il re d'Italia. E usurpatore sacrilego fu dallo stesso Vaticano considerato il popolo italiano.

Francesco Giuseppe, cattolico sfegatato, approvò a piene mani l'attitudine anti-italiana del governo papale. Se ne rese solidale. E mancò con piena coscienza e con piena volontà alle regole impostegli dal *Galatéo*[1], ai doveri impostigli dall'alleanza.

Tanta scortesia e tanta insincerità furono aggravate dalle spavalderie del principe ereditario d'Austria Francesco Ferdinando, l'assassinato di Serajevo. Costui, non meno bigotto dello zio imperatore, si vantò più volte, in privato e in pubblico, di volere invadere con un grosso esercito l'Italia, per prender Roma, restituirla alla Chiesa cattolica e ristabilire così l'antico potere temporale dei papi.

Quanto ne sia rimasto offeso il sentimento cavalleresco e, più che questo, il sentimento nazionale del popolo italiano, ben si può immaginare, quando si consideri che Roma è — come fu nel passato, come sarà nell'avvenire — la sorgente e, ad un tempo, il centro di gravità di tutte le virili bellezze italiche, di tutte le trionfanti grandezze italiche.

IV

Quarta ragione: Coesione nazionale ed efficienza militare.

La superiorità civile d'un popolo, secondo l'opinione dei più, consiste (consisteva, almeno, fino allo scoppio della grande guerra) nella sua coesione nazionale e nella sua efficienza militare.

In Europa — e anche fuori d'Europa, purtroppo! — si credeva che il popolo italiano difettasse dell'una e dell'altra. Di coesione nazionale, perchè l'Italia, dopo raggiunte la

[1] Libro del classico italiano monsignor Giovanni Della Casa (secolo XVI), dove s'insegnano le buone creanze.

sua unità e la sua indipendenza, fu spesso turbata da discordie intestine di carattere spiccatamente regionale. D'efficienza militare, per lo scacco subíto in Africa nella guerra del 1896 contro l'Abissinia, e per la poca abilità dimostrata, anche in Africa, nella guerra del 1911–1912 contro la Turchia.

S'era quindi sicuri che la penisola, tanto famosa per il suo antico fulgore, non fosse altro, oramai, che uno stambergone di locanda e un carcassone di museo, dove un popolo frivolo e poltrone non sapesse fare altro — tra una mandolinata, una tarantella e una maccheronata alla napoletana — che servire camorristicamente i signori visitatori piovuti d'oltr'alpe e d'oltremare, e mostrar loro, goffamente quanto vanagloriosamente, le mummificate reliquie d'un passato, il quale non ha più nulla a che vedere con la vita presente e tanto meno con la vita futura.

Una flaccida scrittrice nord-americana, per esempio, scimmiottando il poeta francese Alfonso di Lamartine che chiamò l'Italia "terra dei morti"[1], si spinse fino all'impudenza d'asserire che la razza latina "è un cadavere in via di putrefazione"[2].

E non solo negli ambienti privati, ma anche nelle sfere ufficiali, s'aveva all'estero una cognizione tutt'altro che esatta e benevola della coesione nazionale e dell'efficienza militare del popolo italiano.

Basta ricordare il seguente episodio.

Il 14 gennaio 1912, durante la guerra italo-turca, la torpediniera italiana *Agordat* fermò a sud della Sardegna il piroscafo francese *Carthago*, sul quale era stata segnalata al governo italiano la presenza d'un velívolo destinato ai Turchi in Tripolitania. Dopo la requisizione fatta dagli ufficiali italiani, il *Carthago* fu dall'*Agordat* scortato a Cagliari ed ivi messo a disposizione del governo di Roma.

Pochi giorni dopo, cioè il 18 gennaio 1912, la stessa torpediniera *Agordat* fermò il vapore postale francese *Manouba* che faceva servizio tra Marsiglia e Tunisi, e

[1] Vedere la risposta che al Lamartine diede il poeta satirico italiano Giuseppe Giusti.

[2] Vedere nel mio libro *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America* (da pag. 118 a pag. 123) la risposta ch'io diedi a questa buona donna.

trovò che a bordo d'esso vi erano 29 ufficiali turchi camuffati da membri della Mezzaluna Rossa, diretti clandestinamente in Tripolitania per ivi combattere alla testa degli Arabi i soldati italiani. I 29 sedicenti membri della Mezzaluna Rossa furono dagli ufficiali dell'*Agordat* sbarcati a Cagliari, ed ivi messi anche a disposizione del governo di Roma, mentre il *Manouba* veniva rilasciato.

Poincaré, ch'era da pochi giorni presidente dei ministri e ministro degli esteri della Repubblica francese, nel protestare contro gli atti "arbitrari" commessi dalla torpediniera italiana *Agordat*, ebbe, tra l'altro, il coraggio di dichiarare in pieno Parlamento che, se il governo di Roma non avesse rilasciato immediatamente il *Carthago* e i 29 ufficiali turchi, la flotta francese avrebbe senz'altro attaccato la flotta italiana e l'avrebbe mandata a fondo nel giro di pochi minuti. Proprio come se si fosse trattato di mandare a fondo le tre gloriose caravelle di Cristoforo Colombo!

Ora, un popolo così misconosciuto, che con Roma toccò l'apogeo della coesione nazionale e dell'efficienza militare, doveva pur sentire il bisogno di mostrare coi fatti (sarebbe stato impossibile con le parole) quanto falsa fosse l'opinione che il mondo s'era formata di lui.

E impose al governo di Vittorio Emanuele III la guerra contro l'Austria, per provare ch'esso — il popolo italiano — nonostante le sue discordie intestine spiccatamente regionali (discordie dovute, più che altro, a ingiustizie di governo), ha anche oggi, come ai tempi di Catone, una saldissima coesione nazionale; per provare ch'esso — il popolo italiano — nonostante lo scacco subíto nella guerra contro l'Abissinia e nonostante le deficienze dimostrate nella guerra contro la Turchia (scacco e deficienze dovute, più che altro, a errori di governo), ha anche oggi, come ai tempi di Giulio Cesare, una formidabile efficienza militare. Formidabile, s'intende, in senso non quantitativo, ma qualitativo: in genio, in gagliardia, in entusiasmo, in perseveranza, in fede nella vittoria.

Impose l'intervento nella grande guerra il popolo italiano, per provare ch'esso — per una di quelle leggi naturali (legge di continuità) che sfugge agl'ignoranti —

può sempre rinnovellarsi nelle virtù dei potentissimi avi; può sempre risorgere — eterna araba fenice — dalle ceneri delle sue millenarie civiltà.

V

Quinta ragione: Il timore dell'isolamento.

Il popolo italiano capì subito che la grande guerra scoppiata in Europa alla fine di luglio del 1914 avrebbe prodotto cambiamenti politici internazionali della massima importanza. E intravide gli effetti funesti che da tali cambiamenti sarebbero derivati alla patria, s'essa fosse rimasta neutrale.

Se avessero vinto gl'Imperi Centrali (Germania ed Austria), l'Italia sarebbe rimasta alla mercè di queste due Potenze, rese ancóra più baldanzose dalla recente vittoria. Sarebbe stata fatta segno alla vendetta che i Teutoni le avevano giurato, per non essersi essa schierata dalla parte loro. Sarebbe stata invasa e conquistata. Sarebbe ridiventata serva dell'Austria. E l'Inghilterra, la Francia, la Russia, ch'essa aveva lasciato sconfiggere e umiliare, non avrebbero fatto altro che sorridere gelidamente con odio e disprezzo.

Se fosse rimasta vincitrice la Triplice Intesa (Inghilterra, Francia, Russia), l'Italia avrebbe dovuto subíre, come punizione della sua neutralità, l'influenza padronesca di queste tre Potenze, influenza cresciuta a dismisura dopo la recente vittoria. Sarebbe stata bloccata da tutti i lati nel Mediterraneo, tanto da non poter più accedere liberamente neppure alle sue colonie africane. Sarebbe stata paralizzata in ogni suo movimento espansivo. Sarebbe stata ridotta alla povertà. E la Germania e l'Austria, ch'essa aveva lasciato sconfiggere e umiliare, non avrebbero fatto altro che sorridere gelidamente con odio e disprezzo.

A buon conto l'Italia, se fosse rimasta neutrale nella grande guerra scoppiata in Europa alla fine di luglio del 1914, avrebbe perduto ogni credito, ogni simpatia nel

mondo. Avrebbe messo a repentaglio la sua stessa unità nazionale, la sua stessa indipendenza. Si sarebbe preclusa la via del progresso. Non sarebbe stata più rispettata e amata da nessuno. Sarebbe stata sfuggita e schifata da tutti — dai vinti e dai vincitori — com'una cagna affamata, com'una carogna verminosa.

Per scongiurare una sì immensa iattura, il popolo italiano impose al governo di Vittorio Emanuele III l'intervento armato della nazione.

La conservazione della propria vita, sia negli esseri singoli che negli esseri collettivi, non è forse una suprema legge naturale? la legge protoplasma di tutte le leggi umane? non è forse una suprema necessità? la più impellente delle necessità fisiche e morali?

VI

Sesta ragione: Il diritto di viaggiare.

Un uomo ha il diritto, in qualunque momento della sua vita, di girare il mondo per lungo e per largo. Ha il diritto d'andare dove la sua volontà lo spinge, dove i suoi interessi lo chiamano. Diritto naturale che nessuno può contestargli, per la semplice ragione ch'esso — il diritto di viaggiare — nacque col primo uomo e per i bisogni e i godimenti degli uomini; per la semplice ragione ch'esso — il diritto di viaggiare — è una forza motrice dell'umano progresso. Forza che più d'ogni altra contribuisce a creare, coltivare, rinsaldare — tra i popoli che sono separati dalle distanze e, più che dalle distanze, dai pregiudizi di razza e di nazionalità — quelle correnti di simpatia che tendono, per un'irresistibile propulsione d'amore, alla fratellanza universale, vale a dire all'apogeo della civiltà umana. All'apogeo che ha, come contenuto sostanziale — oltre allo splendore delle scienze, delle arti, delle lettere — la purità morale dello spirito, per cui l'uomo non può che sinceramente sentire e operare il bene, non mai il male, verso i suoi simili.

Io enunciai e sostenni questo concetto nel mio libro

Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America a pagina 104, dove dissi che — "per quel grande e sacro principio sociale, in base a cui ogni uomo è padrone d'entrare in qualsiasi paese del mondo per esercitarvi liberamente e onestamente i diritti del suo lavoro" — gl'Italiani emigrati negli Stati Uniti non dovevano, con servile senso di gratitudine, considerare e magnificare come ospitale il popolo americano. Tanto più che questo popolo non li accoglieva, almeno allora, da pari a pari. Tanto più che questo popolo ritraeva, almeno allora, dalle braccia poderose e operose degli emigrati italiani, gran parte della prosperità che rendeva esso popolo tanto irragionevole, ingiusto, altezzoso.

E corroborai tale concetto, soggiungendo: "Non mai gl'Inglesi, i Francesi, i Tedeschi, gli stessi Americani e tutti gli altri forestieri che si trovano in Italia a speculare e ad arricchirsi con industrie e commerci fiorenti, non mai si son sognati di considerarsi ospiti del popolo italiano, ma uomini liberi, andati nel nostro paese per esercitarvi appunto i diritti della loro volontà e dei loro interessi".

Solo i tiranni, che vogliono, provocano e dirigono le guerre, osano contestare, anzi conculcare nel peggiore dei modi, il diritto che l'uomo ha, in qualunque momento della sua vita, di girare il mondo per lungo e per largo.

Essi — i tiranni che vogliono, provocano e dirigono le guerre — bloccando le terre e le acque che a loro fa comodo di bloccare — dimenticano, o fingono di dimenticare, che il globo abitato dagli uomini è di tutti gli uomini: com'è di tutti gli uomini l'aria che circonda il globo stesso: com'è di tutti gli uomini il sole che illumina, scalda e feconda il globo stesso.

Essi — i tiranni che vogliono, provocano e dirigono le guerre — impedendo all'uomo (massimamente a quello che non è implicato nelle guerre, che è contro le guerre) d'andare dove la sua volontà lo spinge, dove i suoi interessi lo chiamano, commettono un atto arbitrario della massima gravità: atto che nessun popolo, avente a cuore la propria libertà e la libertà degli altri popoli, dovrebbe tollerare. Il popolo della nuova Italia, forte della sua risvegliata coscienza, non lo tollerò. E impose al governo monarchico dei Savoia l'inter-

vento armato della nazione nella grande guerra, per difendere col proprio sangue uno dei più preziosi doni della natura.

Così esso — il popolo della nuova Italia — seguì in modo mirabile gli esempi dei suoi apostoli. I quali preferirono le carceri, le torture, i roghi, piuttosto che piegarsi, per conto loro o per conto dell'umanità ch'essi degnamente rappresentavano, a qualsiasi restrizione di libertà.

VII

Settima ragione: Solidarietà umana.

Il popolo italiano, per una di quelle leggi naturali che caratterizzano psicologicamente le razze umane l'una dall'altra, ha insiti in sè due sentimenti: un sentimento di simpatia per gli esseri deboli, e un sentimento d'indignazione contro i forti che degli esseri deboli abusano e ne fanno scempio. Due sentimenti che formano, nella peculiare armonia della loro essenza spirituale e della loro estrinsecazione pratica, il granitico fondamento della sua vita sociale.

Si dia uno sguardo alla storia d'Italia — dai tempi in cui sorsero e fiorirono nel sud della penisola le famose repubbliche della Magna Grecia, fino ai tempi odierni — e si vedrà che il popolo italiano si commosse sempre della sorte dei deboli; abbracciò sempre — a fatti e non a parole, per magnanimo impulso morale e non per egoistici interessi materiali — la loro causa, specie quando essa implicò libertà nazionali calpestate o semplicemente minacciate da tiranni prepotenti.

A corroborazione di tale mia affermazione, basta ricordare qui qualcuno dei fatti storici più recenti.

Giuseppe Garibaldi, alla testa d'un corpo di volontari italiani, corse in difesa della Francia repubblicana nella guerra del 1870 contro la Prussia, compiendo gesta eroiche vittoriose degne d'epopea a Digione [1].

[1] In quella memorabile campagna, Garibaldi fu "il solo capitano — così affermò Victor Hugo — che seppe vincere eroicamente".

Ricciotti Garibaldi, figlio vivente dell'Eroe, alla testa d'un corpo di volontari italiani, corse in difesa della Grecia nella guerra del 1897 contro la Turchia, compiendo gesta eroiche vittoriose degne d'epopea a Domokos [1].

Peppino Garibaldi, figlio vivente di Ricciotti, alla testa d'un corpo di volontari italiani, corse in difesa della Francia repubblicana nella grande guerra odierna contro la Germania, compiendo gesta eroiche vittoriose degne d'epopea alle Argonne [2].

E non solo nelle lotte di carattere pubblico collettivo, ma benanche negli alterchi di carattere privato individuale, il popolo italiano mise sempre in evidenza, o, meglio, in azione, i suoi innati sentimenti di simpatia verso i deboli e d'indignazione verso i forti (forti nel senso brutalmente fisico della parola, s'intende).

In America, per esempio, particolarmente nella città dov'io risiedo da parecchio tempo, m'accadde spesso di vedere, nelle strade, persone (due alla volta) disputare brevemente tra loro per motivi ordinariamente futili, e poi azzuffarsi e tempestarsi di pugni. Non uno degli astanti si mosse mai per appaciare i due disputanti, o per evitare, almeno, che la zuffa ingaggiata finisse con la peggio del debole. Il forte potè sempre a suo bell'agio atterrare il debole; cavalcargli sul petto; martellargli le mascelle, il naso, gli occhi; trasformargli il viso (il nobile viso umano!) in un'orrida piaga sanguinolenta; ridurlo in fin di vita. Gli astanti — anche se conoscenti, amici, congiunti del debole — assistirono sempre indifferenti, come ad una scena cinematografica o con ignava voluttà, all'accanito *fight*, sentendo perfino ammirazione per il forte.

In Italia, specialmente nella mia terra di Calabria a buon diritto qualificata "forte e generosa", non può accadere mai nulla di simile. Ivi gli astanti, anche se estranei, s'interpongono fin dalle prime frasi alterate tra i due disputanti. E se non riescono con le ragioni, con le preghiere

[1] Nella battaglia di Domokos cadde, tra gli altri, il deputato repubblicano al Parlamento nazionale italiano Antonio Fratti, a cui Guglielmo Oberdan aveva affidato il suo testamento politico.

[2] Nel combattimento delle Argonne tra volontari garibaldini e soldati tedeschi, caddero, tra gli altri italiani, i giovani Bruno e Sante Garibaldi, fratelli di Peppino.

a calmarli, a ristabilire tra loro la pace, a evitare la zuffa bestiale, simpatizzano senz'altro per il debole; si schierano apertamente e risolutamente dalla parte sua; non permettono che gli si torca un capello; preferiscono ricever essi stessi i colpi, sia pure mortali, del forte, sul quale non tarda a rovesciarsi l'esecrazione generale.

Ora, un popolo così sensibile, così giusto, così umano, avente a sua disposizione un esercito e una flotta formidabili — abbastanza formidabili — non poteva assolutamente rimanere inerte di fronte alla violenza commessa dalla forte e prepotente Austria contro la piccola Serbia. Non poteva rimanere inerte di fronte al delitto commesso dalla forte e prepotente Germania contro il piccolo Belgio. Non poteva rimanere inerte di fronte al torvo e brutale militarismo teutonico, minacciante, con crescente incalzante gravità, quella Francia repubblicana che aveva versato fiumi di sangue per l'unità e l'indipendenza della sorella latina e per il trionfo dei princípi democratici in tutta l'Europa. Non poteva rimanere inerte di fronte al torvo e brutale militarismo teutonico, minacciante, con crescente incalzante gravità, quell'Inghilterra che ospitò sempre, con larga e affettuosa liberalità, anche in tempi di generale reazione, tutti gli esuli, tutti i grandi perseguitati politici italiani (da Giordano Bruno a Ugo Foscolo, da Mazzini a Malatesta [1]); quell'Inghilterra che con le sue navi *Intrepido* e *Argus* protesse e facilitò, nella primavera del 1860, il memorabile sbarco dei Mille a Marsala, sbarco che decise dell'unità nazionale italiana; quell'Inghilterra che accolse Garibaldi com' un dio, quando l'Eroe impersonante il popolo della nuova Italia si recò nell'aprile del 1864 a visitare Londra. Non poteva rimanere inerte di fronte al torvo e brutale militarismo teutonico, minacciante, con crescente incalzante gravità, quella Russia che, a mezzo dei suoi grandi uomini come Turgheniew, Tolstoi, Tcher-

[1] Il dottor Enrico Malatesta — uno dei *leaders* anarchici italiani viventi — tra il 7 e il 10 giugno 1914 capeggiò nelle province d'Ancona, Forlì e Ravenna un moto rivoluzionario tendente ad abbattere la monarchia dei Savoia e proclamare la Repubblica d'Italia. Perseguitato dal governo di Vittorio Emanuele III, errò per tutta l'Europa e fu dovunque respinto. Trovò rifugio soltanto a Londra, dove attualmente risiede.

nichewski, Gogol, Gorki, sempre ammirò e glorificò lealmente l'Italia [1]; quella Russia che fu la prima a mandare i suoi marinari in Calabria e Sicilia per soccorrere quelle popolazioni colpite dal terribile terremoto del 1908.

Se fosse rimasto inerte, esso — il popolo italiano — avrebbe rinnegato la sua incomparabile personalità morale materiata tutta d'altruismo e gratitudine; avrebbe offuscato le sue più fulgide tradizioni di pensiero e d'azione; avrebbe, quel che è peggio — nel momento in cui la morte s'accingeva a plasmare sui campi di battaglia della vecchia Europa la nuova vita del mondo — tradito la causa dell'umanità. La quale deve stare al disopra d'ogni e qualunque interesse personale e nazionale, come la vita fisica dell'universo sta, perennemente, al disopra delle singole parti che la compongono.

Perchè è inutile negarlo! La parola, contrapposta al fatto, non ebbe mai valore. E non ne avrà mai, finchè nel fondo di certi esseri umani risiederà — come morchia in fondo a giare piene d'olio, come feccia in fondo a botti piene di vino, come melma in fondo a pozzi pieni d'acqua — quell'istinto malvagio che è in aperta antitesi con i sentimenti della bontà, della pietà, dell'amore, su cui dovrebbero poggiare ed evolversi tutte le civiltà.

Si disse sempre, in tutti i toni, ai potentati d'Europa, di non alimentare il militarismo. Ma essi l'alimentarono, e come!

Si disse sempre, in tutti i toni, ai potentati d'Europa, di non provocare le guerre. Ma essi le provocarono, e come!

Bisognava lasciare, in su l'aurora del ventesimo secolo, che i soldatoni imperiali — imitando le ataviche orde d'Alarico e d'Attila — invadessero i territori delle nazioni piccole indipendenti e vi trucidassero gli uomini, v'insozzassero le donne, vi mutilassero i bambini, vi rubassero il frutto di tanti sudori, v'incendiassero case, radessero al suolo intere città — cinicamente, impunemente — come si lasciò, ad esempio, che i Turchi facessero per anni e anni coi poveri Armeni?

[1] Basta ricordare il solo Gorki, che, dopo respinto dagli Stati Uniti d'America per colpa d'un ipocrito puritanismo, si stabilì a Capri ed ivi, ospitato rispettosamente e amorosamente, rilevò e magnificò nei suoi scritti le virtù del popolo italiano.

Ma allora addio solidarietà umana!

Essa — dopo tante promesse, dopo tanti entusiasmi — non sarebbe stata per i deboli, i quali avevano avuto la semplicità di credere e aspettare, se non una frase arcadica, vuota, schernitrice, epilogante ancóra una volta l'ignobile farsa dei pulpitisti (preti e non preti) che sanno soltanto predicar bene e razzolar male; dei pulpitisti che, alla prova del foco, sanno soltanto mettere in pratica la loro egoistica teoria ingusciata tutta nella parabolica formula: "lontano da me, e dove va va".

I testoni coronati non avrebbero voluto altro!

Fortunatamente il popolo italiano, con la sua svegliata intelligenza, comprese subito che le parole non avrebbero potuto impedire i fatti [1].

E si slanciò nella grande guerra, esso — il popolo italiano — col suo cuor di fanciullo, per contrapporre fatti a fatti, azione ad azione, forza bruta a forza bruta (una specie di *similia similibus curantur*); per insegnare alla turba dei queruli dottrinai, che il diritto conculcato dei deboli si difende non con le parole, ma col sacrificio della propria vita; che le vittime innocenti della barbarie (militaresca e non militaresca) si vendicano non con le parole, ma col sacrificio della propria vita; che la vera fratellanza dei popoli — ideale a cui tende di continuo per immutabile legge naturale l'anima umana — s'afferma, s'esalta, si perpetua non con le parole, ma col sacrificio della propria vita.

Il popolo italiano sa bene che, dopo la grande guerra, non gli toccherà che una sola ricompensa: quella della fame, del disprezzo, dell'oblio peggio di prima. Ma che

[1] Nel mese di maggio del 1915, cioè alla vigilia della dichiarazione di guerra fatta dal governo italiano al governo austriaco, le mura delle città d'Italia erano tutte tappezzate di cartelloni che dicevano:

"Non dimentichiamo mai
il Belgio,
il Lusitania,
i bimbi sgozzati,
i vecchi massacrati,
le donne violate,
i paesi devastati,
gli ospedali bombardati
per sola manía di distruzione dall'esercito di Sua Maestà Guglielmo II."

gl'importa? Esso — spirito eminentemente poetico e filosofico a un tempo, provato a tutte le privazioni, a tutte le ingratitudini, a tutti i dolori — penserà d'avere tracciata, col suo purissimo sangue, la via che, unica, dato l'attuale ordine di cose, potrà condurre alla tanto sospirata pace universale. E un tale pensiero sarà più che sufficiente a renderlo contento, felice, beato.

Ho detto "dato l'attuale ordine cose". Ho detto "unica". E mi spiego.

La vita d'una nazione, oggigiorno, per quanto complessa, poggia in gran parte su basi essenzialmente industriali, costruite dal popolo non per il proprio tornaconto, ma per il tornaconto d'una minoranza ventraiola e crudele chiamata plutocrazia, la quale col popolo non ha altro di comune se non la semplice darviniana origine scimmiesca.

Un siffatto industrialismo nazionalista, per mantenersi e prosperare — sempre, s'intende, a beneficio della minoranza ventraiola e crudele chiamata plutocrazia — deve, necessariamente, spingersi a competizioni commerciali con l'industrialismo d'un'altra nazione o d'altre nazioni, e viceversa.

Ma le competizioni commerciali, affinchè diano risultati finanziari proporzionati alle voglie ingorde della plutocrazia nazionalista, debbono essere ineluttabilmente e strenuamente favorite e protette dallo Stato.

Si presta a una partigianeria tanto sfacciata e iniqua il governo d'uno Stato odierno?

Sicuro che vi si presta!

E come potrebbe non prestarvisi, se esso — il governo d'uno Stato odierno — sia che si copra con la maschera sormontata da una corona reale o imperiale, sia che si copra con la maschera sormontata da un berretto frigio repubblicano — non è altro, oramai, se non un ente volontariamente asservito alla minoranza ventraiola e crudele chiamata plutocrazia?

Ora, un siffatto governo non potrebbe, francamente, senza darsi con la zappa sui piedi, cimentare le forze militari, cioè le forze positive della nazione, se non per favorire e proteggere gl'interessi del padrone, o, per essere grammati-

calmente più esatti, della padrona (plutocrazia, in lingua italiana, è di genere femminile). Le guerre della nuova Italia in Africa (per esempio quella contro l'Abissinia e quella contro la Turchia) non ebbero altro scopo, almeno originario, se non la cosidetta "penetrazione commerciale", voluta ed effettuata dal governo monarchico dei Savoia per conto della plutocrazia italiana. E la stessa grande guerra che da tre anni infuria sull' Europa non fu provocata che dall'invidia della plutocrazia germanica per il primato commerciale della plutocrazia inglese nel mondo [1].

Nelle cause di puro carattere umanitario — quelle cioè che involgono l'elevamento intelletuale morale economico, la giustizia, la libertà, la felicità dei popoli — il governo d'uno Stato odierno non cimenta mai le forze militari della nazione. Ed è naturale; poichè le forze militari, facendo trionfare la causa umanitaria, non sortirebbero che un solo effetto: la fine della plutocrazia, vale a dire la fine di tutte le disuguaglianze, di tutte le ingiustizie, di tutte le tirannidi sociali. Un effetto, come si vede, ben diverso da quello per cui le forze militari delle nazioni oggigiorno esistono.

Nelle cause di puro carattere umanitario, esso — il governo d'uno Stato odierno — impiega solo la forza negativa della nazione: la diplomazia. La quale non ha altro còmpito, se non quello di ciarlare, arruffare il più che sia possibile la matassa, gettare polvere negli occhi ai gonzi, cloroformizzare la nazione, riducendo ogni palpito di vita collettiva allo *statu quo*, a questa comoda ellissi latina (comoda per i forti, ma nefasta per i deboli) fossilizzata e fossilizzatrice.

Debbono i popoli continuare ad affrontare una situazione tanto tangibile nel suo vizioso male cronico, contrapponendo le solite innocue parole ai fatti assassini delle feroci e sorde plutocrazie?

Ma, in tal modo, essi — i popoli — non farebbero che ribadire sempre più con le proprie mani le catene della schiavitù; non farebbero che perpetuare le guerre, sempre a

[1] Le altre cause che determinarono la grande guerra (panslavismo, *revenge* francese, irredentismo italiano, ecc.) non furono che cause d'importanza affatto secondaria.

vantaggio dei furbi che, oziando, godono, e a danno degl'ingenui che, lavorando, soffrono.

Finchè esistono gl'industrialismi nazionalisti con le rispettive competizioni commerciali: finchè esistono le plutocrazie che nelle loro mani hanno accentrate, e possono disporne a lor talento, tutte le forze positive delle nazioni (dalla forza finanziaria a quella militare) cotidianamente legalizzate dai governi e benedette dalle religioni che sono anche, per grazia di Dio, al servizio dei forti: finchè siffatte plutocrazie, per sempre maggiore sete di ricchezza e di dominio — sete originata da innata e incallita malvagità d'animo — provocano le guerre, l'inerzia dei popoli, armata solo di vecchio rettoricume lacrimoso e sia pure sdegnoso, non è altro, secondo me, che un'incongruenza, un anacronismo, una follia, un suicidio. È il fragile vetro che vuol resistere ai colpi del maglio possente. È la bolla di sapone che vuol resistere al cozzo della viva roccia calcárea.

Bisogna cambiar rotta. Siamo in un secolo nel quale non si può più credere, ragionevolmente, se non ad una sola verità: a quella che ci viene insegnata o, meglio, dimostrata dalla scienza positiva. Bisogna quindi vivere un po' meno nel mondo metafisico dei sogni, e un po' più nel mondo fisico della realtà. Le parole con le quali Giosuè fermò il sole e la luna; le parole con le quali Cristo risuscitò Lazzaro di Betania, non sono altro, oramai, che arrugginiti ferravecchi biblici.

I popoli debbono far fatti. Debbono, tutti indistintamente, creare tra loro una salda alleanza spirituale (prodromo della loro unione politica universale) e stabilire, come principio fondamentale di giustizia inviolabile e invariabile, che quando una controversia sorta tra due nazioni degenera in guerra, ciascuno di essi — ciascuno dei popoli non implicati nella controversia degenerata in guerra — deve, *a priori*, imporre al proprio Governo l'intervento armato in favore della nazione debole che si trova dalla parte della ragione. Dalla parte della ragione non secondo il porcino punto di vista della minoranza ventraiola e crudele chiamata plutocrazia; non secondo le verbose

leggi partigiane votate dai Parlamenti e sanzionate dai re, dagl'imperatori e dai presidenti delle repubbliche; non secondo le cervellotiche sentenze sputate dagl'ingonnellati commedianti dei diversi tribunali arbitrali dell'Aia. Ma dalla parte della ragione, secondo il giudizio che scaturisce spontaneo, scevro di preconcetti e di passioni, dalla libera intelligenza, dalla candida coscienza dei popoli stessi; secondo, sopratutto, quel naturale diritto alla vita che rende sempre bella, sacra, degna di trionfo la causa dei deboli.

Solo in tal modo — per ora — si può frenare la morbosa fregola aggressiva dei forti. Solo in tal modo si possono subitamente evitare le guerre.

Infatti, se il governo di Francesco Giuseppe, per esempio, avesse saputo *in antecedenza* che i popoli d'Europa, anzi del mondo intero, sarebbero insorti e intervenuti prontamente con tutte le forze positive delle loro nazioni in difesa della Serbia, esso — il governo di Francesco Giuseppe — per quanto potente e prepotente, per quanto spalleggiato da quel colosso militaresco ch'era l'impero germanico — non si sarebbe azzardato di fare la voce troppo grossa contro la piccola nazione balcanica difendente la propria unità, la propria indipendenza; non avrebbe commesso l'insana temerità di mandarle, nel luglio del 1914, quell'*ultimatum* che doveva scatenare sul mondo il più terribile degl'inferni.

Ma, purtroppo, l'alleanza spirituale dei popoli, prodromo della loro unione politica universale, non si potrà mai effettuare, se, prima, i due più avanzati gruppi di dottrinai, che sui popoli hanno uno straordinario ascendente morale, non sapranno efficacemente adattare la loro concezione pacifista, sfrondata d'ogni intransigenza dogmatica, agli avvenimenti che giorno per giorno si svolgono sulla Terra.

Primo gruppo. Quelli che — circoscrivendo il progresso umano alla sola lotta di classe (problema economico) — sono in favore della guerra, soltanto nel caso in cui si tratti di difendere da un'invasione nemica il paese nel quale stanno riconcentrati tutti gl'interessi materiali del proletariato nazionale ch'essi rappresentano. *Astensionisti condizionali.*

Secondo gruppo. Quelli che — aspettando dalla rivoluzione la distruzione d'ogni autorità politica, giudiziaria, militare, economica, religiosa — sono contrari a tutte le guerre, poichè esse non si combattono che per il rotondissimo ventre di "lor signori". *Astensionisti assoluti.*

I membri di questi due gruppi sono, senza dubbio, animati da rette intenzioni; mirano all'alto fine, cui mira ogni mente aperta e operosa, ogni cuore sensibile e gentile: all'emancipazione di tutte le creature oppresse.

Io perciò voglio ragionare un po' con loro, serenamente[1].

E dico agli astensionisti condizionali:

La tesi della guerra per sola difesa nazionale, da voi sostenuta, è in aperta contradizione con le dottrine che voi dite di professare. Dottrine che, nel loro contenuto idealistico spiccatamente e rigorosamente internazionale, non ammettono restrizioni di sorta.

Il grido "lavoratori di tutti i paesi, unitivi!" — sintetizzante codeste dottrine — non va interpretato nel senso esclusivamente economico che voi credete. Esso — a meno che non si voglia impicciolire il merito di chi lo lanciò — va, logicamente, interpretato in un senso molto più vasto. In un senso abbracciante tutti i problemi sociali, dai quali quello economico non si può astrarre, senza turbare l'armonia o rompere addirittura la compagine delle cose che regolano e perpetuano il vero progresso umano.

Perchè la questione sociale è poliedrica.

E il problema economico non è altro che una parte della questione sociale (una faccia del poliedro). Una parte intimamente connessa alle altre, anzi dipendente dalle altre e specialmente da una: dall'ignoranza.

Lo disse autorevolmente tre secoli addietro, fra le più orribili torture dell'inquisizione laica ed ecclesiastica, quell'arditissimo padre del comunismo universale che fu il mio enciclopedico concittadino Tommaso Campanella.

Secondo il pensiero di questo gigante precursore delle

[1] Non mi occupo degli altri gruppi pacifisti, perchè essi, essendo emanazione più o meno diretta delle plutocrazie, non possono essere sinceri.

"Non ragioniam di lor, ma guarda e passa."

(Dante, *Divina Commedia*, Inferno, canto III).

civili rivendicazioni umane — pensiero confermato appieno dai fatti — la questione sociale abbraccia:

Primo: *l'ignoranza*, la quale, impedendo di far conoscere i veri vizî e le vere virtù, genera e nutrisce i mali "sotto cui freme e piange il mondo".

Secondo: il *cieco amor proprio*, ossia l'egoismo, figlio degno dell'ignoranza.

Terzo: la *tirannide* (falsa possanza), il *sofisma* (falsa scienza), l'*ipocrisia* (falso amore), cioè i tre mali estremi (la "trina bugia") che hanno radice e fomento nel cieco amor proprio.

Quarto: le *carestie*, ossia la miseria (il problema economico), le *guerre*, le *pesti*, l'*invidia*, l'*inganno*, l'*ingiustizia*, la *lussuria*, l'*accidia*, lo *sdegno*, derivanti tutti dai tre mali estremi, ai quali gerarchicamente sottostanno.

Il problema economico, dunque, non si può astrarre dagli altri. Non si può risolvere indipendentemente dagli altri. Se si potesse risolvere indipendentemente dagli altri, la sua soluzione isolata non raggiungerebbe lo scopo (il miglioramento morale del mondo) a cui tende l'intera questione sociale. E la prova di questa mia affermazione, che a prima vista può sembrare un paradosso, ce la dà in modo irrefutabile la stessa plutocrazia. Proprio così!

È un fatto — e spero che su questo punto non ci saranno divergenze — che la plutocrazia è composta, al pari del proletariato, d'uomini di carne e d'ossa della medesima specie.

Questi uomini (i plutocrati) hanno già risolto, e splendidamente risolto, a loro vantaggio, il problema economico. Spero che neanche su questo punto ci saranno divergenze.

Ma la soluzione di tale problema, che ha portato tutte le comodità, tutti i piaceri sensuali della vita ai plutocrati, ha essa, nello stesso tempo, portato loro un proporzionato miglioramento morale? Neppure per sogno!

La soluzione del problema economico (comodità, piaceri sensuali a bizzeffe) ha invece portato ai plutocrati un enorme peggioramento morale, visibile perfino ai ciechi. Ha insegnato ch'essa — la detta soluzione — scompagnata dalla soluzione degli altri problemi sociali, non è, e non potrà mai

essere, la panacéa predicata dai teorici di superficiale od ottenebrata mentalità; ha dimostrato ancóra una volta, ed oggi più che mai, il valore positivo della verità proclamata in tempi difficili dal sommo apostolo stilese. Il quale fu — col Vinci, col Pomponazzi, col Telesio, col Bruno, col Galilei — un genio creatore del positivismo moderno: di quel positivismo che, alla volubile autorità della parola, sostituì la stabile autorità dei fatti: di quel positivismo, culminato ai nostri giorni nella monumentale opera filosofica di quell'altra gloria italiana che è il vivente professor Roberto Ardigò.

E se il grido sintetizzante la dottrina professata da voi, astensionisti condizionali, ha un contenuto idealistico spiccatamente e rigorosamente internazionale, non capisco con quale coscienza o, peggio, con che cuore, voi possiate restringere la guerra alla sola difesa nazionale, lasciando che le nazioni forti, trovantisi dalla parte del torto, aggredissero e schiacciassero a lor piacimento le nazioni deboli, trovantisi dalla parte della ragione.

Un siffatto principio restrittivo (guerra per sola difesa nazionale) è d'una crudeltà egoistica inaudita. È la più ripugnante ironia dell'internazionale, o internazionalismo che dir si voglia. È l'assoluta negazione d'ogni solidarietà umana e animale. Dico animale, perchè financo gli animali sentono e mettono in pratica, tra loro, quella che noi chiamiamo solidarietà morale verso i deboli. Il cane (basta questo solo esempio) arrischia continuamente la propria vita per difendere le pecore (animali deboli e innocenti) dal lupo (animale forte, selvaggio e prepotente).

E la vostra stessa nazione, astensionisti condizionali, non tarderebbe a cadere vittima della malvagità, delle cupidige plutocratiche d'una nazione più forte; vittima del vostro stesso errore.

Perchè non basta volersi difendere. Bisogna potersi difendere. La Serbia voleva anche difendersi dall'Austria. Il Belgio voleva anche difendersi dalla Germania. Ma l'una e l'altro, essendo troppo piccoli e, per conseguenza, troppo deboli di fronte ai loro aggressori, dovettero soccombere, nonostante poggiassero la loro difesa su diritti d'indipen-

denza e su punti d'onore più che sacri. E non si rialzerebbero più, e rimarrebbero per sempre schiavi dei tiranni che con soldatesca brutalità li calpestarono, se essi — i due popoli eroici serbo e belga — dovessero aspettare aiuto dai fratelli i quali si strombazzano internazionalisti, stando rinchiocciolìti nell'astensionismo nazionalista.

E se la questione sociale abbraccia molti altri problemi, oltre a quello economico: e se l'emancipazione delle creature oppresse dipende dalla soluzione parallela di tutti questi problemi e non dalla soluzione d'un solo d'essi, non capisco perchè voi, seguaci del grido sintetizzante la questione sociale in tutta la sua idealistica interezza, dobbiate persistere nella soluzione del solo problema economico. Non capisco perchè dobbiate disinteressarvi, o interessarvi assai poco, degli altri problemi, quand' è assodato che la parallela soluzione di tutti, non la soluzione isolata d'uno d'essi, potrà eliminare i mali "sotto cui freme e piange il mondo": i mali che impediscono l'emancipazione tanto sospirata.

Si sa che le guerre, oggigiorno, non si fanno per vendicare l'onore offeso d'un qualsiasi Menelao più o meno coronato, come si fece, per esempio, la mitologica guerra dell'antica Grecia contro Troia d'omerica memoria.

Le guerre, oggigiorno, come ho accennato più su e come voi stessi astensionisti condizionali riconoscete, si fanno per fini essenzialmente economici: per quei fini ai quali tende appunto la dottrina che voi dite di professare, pure a volerla interpretare nel senso il più angusto.

E se si fanno per fini essenzialmente economici, non vedo la ragione per cui voi, seguaci dell'internazionalismo ridotto sia pure ai minimi termini, vale a dire ai termini strettamente economici, dobbiate asternervi dall'intervenire in esse.

Perchè tali fini, obietterete, non compromettono gl'interessi economici del nostro proletariato nazionale.

Che gl'interessi economici del proletariato d'una nazione astensionista (neutrale) sieno compromessi — data la presente organizzazione industriale e commerciale del

mondo — da una guerra tra due o più nazioni e massimamente da una guerra di gigantesche proporzioni come quella che da tre anni infuria sulla vecchia Europa e, per riflesso, su tutto il mondo, è una verità accessibile a tutte le intelligenze.

Ma se anche, per una lontana ipotesi, gl'interessi economici del proletariato nazionale neutrale non fossero menomamente compromessi dalle guerre altrui, voi, astensionisti condizionali, avreste egualmente il dovere d'intervenire in esse, per difendere gl'interessi economici del proletariato della nazione più debole aggredita da una nazione plutocraticamente più forte. E ciò per coerenza fattiva, non parolaia, con la dottrina sia pure strettamente economica che voi dite di professare.

Gli scrupoli sentimentali di non volere intervenire nelle guerre, perchè sareste costretti ad ammazzare i fratelli vostri, dovreste ormai lasciarli da parte.

Non sono fratelli vostri i soldati invasori che dovreste ammazzare in caso di difesa nazionale?

Non sono fratelli vostri — e fratelli della vostra stessa nazione! — i crumiri (*scabs*) che voi combattete e ammazzate durante gli scioperi?

E gli scioperi stessi, a cui voi ricorrete sovente come mezzo difensivo nella lotta di classe, non sono essi, in sostanza, guerre tra fratelli sfruttati e fratelli sfruttatori? guerre d'odio e di sangue tra fratelli proletari unionisti e fratelli proletari non unionisti?

Voi proletari appartenenti alle unioni, quando siete in isciopero, assalite e ammazzate senza tanti complimenti i vostri fratelli proletari non appartenenti alle unioni. Perche?

Per difendervi dalla loro concorrenza economica.

Eppure raramente i proletari non appartenenti alle unioni vi sostituiscono nel lavoro per cattivezza d'animo.

Essi, nella maggior parte dei casi, non sono (ed io lo so, lo so!) che figli, fratelli, mariti, padri ridotti all'estrema miseria. Non sapendo a qual santo votarsi nei tristi giorni della loro esistenza, non sapendo dove battere la testa, i disgraziati affrontano con la disperazione addosso i vostri

insulti, le vostre violenze, il vostro disprezzo: e corrono alla conquista del tozzo di pane e del pezzo di carbone che debbono servire a salvare le loro amate creature agonizzanti di fame e di freddo.

Voi non volete saperne di ciò. Voi non volete saperne dei motivi, pur derivanti da forza maggiore, che costringono i vostri sventurati fratelli a farvi la concorrenza nel lavoro. Voi sapete solo ch'essi vi fanno male. Epperò li combattete e ammazzate.

E i poliziotti — sia quelli pubblici che quelli privati (con questi ultimi intendo alludere ai ferocissimi poliziotti privati nord-americani soprannominati *gunmen*) — adibiti "a mantenere l'ordine" durante gli scioperi, non sono anch'essi, in fin dei conti, fratelli vostri? E perchè li combattete e ammazzate?

Perchè essi non esitano punto a sparare contro di voi. Perchè essi non esitano punto a trucidare le vostre donne e i vostri bambini.

Io paragono i crumiri ai soldati di leva forzata; paragono i poliziotti ai soldati di professione. L'azione involontaria degli uni (crumiri e soldati di leva forzata) è ispirata, come l'azione volontaria degli altri (poliziotti e soldati di professione), dalla plutocrazia, è incitata dalla plutocrazia, si risolve a vantaggio della plutocrazia.

Ora se voi — proletari unionisti rappresentanti l'internazionalismo sintetizzato nel grido "lavoratori di tutti i paesi, unitevi!" — combattete e ammazzate i crumiri e i poliziotti durante gli scioperi, perchè non dovreste combattere e ammazzare anche i soldati durante le guerre?

I crumiri e i poliziotti sono, ripeto, fratelli vostri al pari dei soldati. Il male che fanno questi ultimi (i soldati) ha la stessa radice del male che fanno gli altri (crumiri e poliziotti); ha un'unica radice: la plutocrazia, questo moderno vaso di Pandóra.

E se con la lotta di classe, culminante negli ammazzamenti dei crumiri e dei poliziotti durante gli scioperi, voi, astensionisti condizionali, difendete economicamente i vostri interessi proletari nazionali contro la vostra pluto-

crazia nazionale, dovete nello stesso tempo, per coerenza alla dottrina internazionale che voi dite di professare, ammettere l'intervento armato in tutte le guerre odierne in difesa non solo dell'integrità territoriale della vostra nazione racchiudente in sè gl'interessi materiali del vostro proletariato nazionale, ma anche in difesa dell'integrità territoriale racchiudente gl'interessi materiali del proletariato di tutte le nazioni deboli aggredite per ingordigia economica dal comune nemico: dalla plutocrazia.

Se persisterete nella vostra attitudine restrittiva, voi, astensionisti condizionali, finirete col discreditare il grido sintetizzante la dottrina della quale vi vantate propugnatori.

Perchè esso grido fu lanciato per colpire a morte, a mezzo dell'unione dei lavoratori di tutti i paesi, non la plutocrazia d'una sola nazione, ma le plutocrazie di tutte le nazioni.

Se le plutocrazie di tutte le nazioni, invece di morire, continuano a vivere e ad impinguire sempre più col sangue dei lavoratori di tutti i paesi, significa che la vostra azione restrittiva (astensionismo condizionale) non è la giusta interpretazione del grido sintetizzante la dottrina ridotta sia pure ai termini strettamente economici.

Del resto, se i proletariati di cinque tra le maggiori nazioni del mondo (Francia, Inghilterra, Russia, Giappone, Italia) — proletariati che più e meglio degli altri avevano ascoltato il verbo della dottrina sintetizzata nel grido "lavoratori di tutti i paesi, unitevi!" — si schierarono nella grande guerra a fianco della Serbia e del Belgio, significa ch'essi — i suddetti proletariati — ripudiarono l'interpretazione restrittiva dell'astensionismo condizionale e misero risolutamente in pratica (specialmente il proletariato italiano) tutto il contenuto idealistico spiccatamente e rigorosamente internazionale ch'esso grido sintetizzava.

Voi, astensionisti condizionali, ravvedetevi lealmente dell'errore in cui cadeste (errore relativamente ai tempi, relativamente alla formidabile efficienza positiva raggiunta dalle plutocrazie, s'intende), e seguíte il buon senso pratico dei popoli, se non volete che le vostre file s'assottiglino

sempre più, se non volete rimanere travolti nel turbine imperversante dei fatti.

Ostinandovi a non seguire i popoli nel loro buon senso pratico, significa che voi non sapete comprendere la loro anima.

E i popoli vi abbandoneranno e si daranno a chi saprá condurli — per vie meno tortuose, meno impérvie — alla tanto necessaria emancipazione.

Perchè i popoli sono stanchi d'aspettare. Le loro sofferenze fisiche e morali sono cresciute in proporzione delle comodità, dei piaceri sensuali delle plutocrazie. Hanno raggiunto — le sofferenze fisiche e morali dei popoli — il grado massimo raggiunto dalle comodità, dai piaceri sensuali delle plutocrazie.

I popoli sono stanchi d'aspettare.

Astensionisti condizionali, meditate queste verità.

E dico agli astensionisti assoluti:

È vero, come voi sostenete e com'io stesso sostengo, che le guerre, oggigiorno, si combattono per il rotondissimo ventre di "lor signori". Ma chi è che le combatte? Forse "lor signori"? Essi le provocano e le dirigono solamente. Chi in realtà le combatte sono i popoli, sui quali le plutocrazie dominano.

Ora, in mezzo ai popoli che fanno le guerre vi sono anche astensionisti assoluti travestiti da soldati non per volontà propria, ma per forza d'una di quelle leggi partigiane favorevoli alle plutocrazie nazionaliste (coscrizione militare obbligatoria), delle quali ho fatto cenno più su.

E se sono i popoli, se sono i fratelli vostri, se ne va di mezzo la loro vita individuale e collettiva, come fate voi a disinteressarvene, a restarvene inerti?

Potreste disinteressarvene, restarvene inerti, se "lor signori" abitassero un pianeta diverso da quello abitato dai popoli, dai fratelli vostri, e ivi avessero vaghezza di scannarsi a vicenda, distruggersi tra loro, soltanto tra loro.

Ma dal momento che "lor signori" abitano il pianeta abitato dai popoli, dai fratelli vostri e, per i mezzi positivi di cui dispongono, possono a lor talento provocare e dirigere le

guerre, è necessario che voi ve ne interessiate, prendendovi parte attiva.

Perchè essi — "lor signori" — dalle guerre non pérdono mai nulla; guadagnano sempre.

Sono i popoli, sono i fratelli vostri, sono gli umili, i quali lavorano e penano giorno e notte, che nelle guerre pérdono sempre e tutto.

Il vostro astensionismo assoluto — di fronte ai deboli trucidati sui campi di battaglia, di fronte alle donne stuprate, ai bambini mutilati, alle case saccheggiate, alle città incendiate — vi mette nella stessa lista di quei tali anacoreti (santificati poi dalla Chiesa cattolica), i quali si ritiravano nelle solitudini dei deserti, ed ivi, infischiandosi delle creature oppresse nel mondo, non pensavano ad altro — egoisticamente, quanto stupidamente — che alla salvezza eterna delle loro anime.

Obietterete:

Ma perchè i popoli non entrano nell'orbita delle nostre idee, le quali non hanno altro scopo se non quello di liberare per mezzo della rivoluzione, poichè con altri mezzi non è stato finora possibile, i popoli stessi dalla tirannide plutocratica che li affama e li spinge continuamente al macello fratricida?

Prima di rispondere a una tale domanda, dichiaro ch'io, personalmente, credo possibile il regime di vita individualista da voi bramato e propugnato. Lo credo possibile non per snobismo più o meno dottrinario, ma perchè gli uomini — se non tutti, certo una buona parte — han già toccato il grado di purità morale necessario per far passare il detto regime dallo stato teorico allo stato pratico. Non ho bisogno di cercare tra le morte generazioni. Mi basta guardare tra le viventi, e nella sola Italia, per trovare le prove corroboranti una tale mia credenza, una tale mia affermazione. Roberto Ardigò, Pasquale Villari, Teodoro Moneta, Guglielmo Marconi. Chi oserebbe dire che questi uomini, ed altri come questi o anche di minore entità morale, avrebbero bisogno d'una qualsiasi autorità politica, giudiziaria, militare, economica, religiosa per vivere tra loro in perfetto buon essere, in perfetta pace, in perfetta armonia?

E un'infinità d'aziende private (senza contare le numerose tribù ingiustamente chiamate selvagge) non si reggono esse prosperosamente, tranquillamente, felicemente con leggi che non sono scritte in nessun codice? con leggi che non hanno altra sostanziale autorità se non quella proveniente dai doveri che ciascun socio delle aziende in parola sente naturalmente in sè, e osserva immancabilmente, a favore degli altri soci?

Chi ammette la legge dell'evoluzione, deve, onestamente, ammettere l'individualismo.

Perchè la legge dell'evoluzione, moralmente parlando, non è altro che lo studio delle umane virtù; mentre l'individualismo non è altro che l'esercizio delle umane virtù.

L'evoluzione non è altro che la teoria del vivere civile. L'individualismo non è altro che la pratica del vivere civile.

L'individualismo — in quanto rappresenta il grado di perfezione morale a cui l'uomo è già pervenuto, e per il quale egli si sente irresistibilmente inclinato, anzi capace, di praticare sempre il bene, non mai il male, verso i suoi simili — è l'ideale supremo dell'evoluzione; è, direi quasi, il complemento dell'evoluzione, se non sapessi che l'evoluzione, come sinonimo di progesso, è infinita e non può avere, per conseguenza, almeno in senso assoluto, un complemento.

Detto questo, a onore della verità, rispondo alla vostra obiezione, astensionisti assoluti.

I popoli non entrano nell'orbita delle vostre idee, perchè essi non sono ancóra arrivati a quell'elevazione intellettuale necessaria per comprendere la sublimità del fine a cui voi tendete. E non fanno la rivoluzione, perchè essi — o quelli d'essi che a tale elevazione son già arrivati — rifuggono, per innata delicatezza d'animo o per altre rispettabili ragioni, da un mezzo di lotta così violento e cruento. Tanto più ch'esso — il mezzo in parola (la rivoluzione) non diede mai — come la storia insegna — risultati pratici proporzionati agli sforzi, ai sacrifici fatti dai rivoluzionari; non debellò mai, come avrebbe dovuto, e neppure arrestò in qualche modo, la rigogliosa vitalità delle plutocrazie incarnanti tutti i mali sociali.

Ma sol perchè i popoli non sono ancóra arrivati alla

suddetta elevazione intellettuale: sol perchè essi non possono o non vogliono fare la rivoluzione, voi, astensionisti assoluti, vi credete in diritto di lasciarli, durante le guerre, in balía di sè stessi, in balía dei più astuti, dei più forti, dei più cattivi?

Una siffatta intransigenza vendicativa, quanto negativa, non si concilia, a dire il vero, coi vostri aprioristici princípi di fratellanza universale; è indegna del vostro civile apostolato, specie se si consideri che voi, fuori delle guerre — delle guerre militaresche, s'intende — non esitate a rompere la rigidità, che dovrebb'essere invulnerabile, del vostro astensionismo assoluto, scendendo in campo per combattere battaglie di carattere strettamente economico, che non sono di certo favorevoli alle vostre teorie individualistiche.

Intendo parlare degli scioperi. E degli scioperi parziali. Perchè dovrei parlare degli scioperi generali nazionali o internazionali — gli scioperi, cioè, abbraccianti tutte le categorie dei lavoratori d'una nazione o di tutte le nazioni — se essi, dacchè la lotta di classe è entrata nella sua fase pratica, non si sono fatti che a furia di sole frasi rettoriche più o meno reboanti?

Voi dunque, astensionisti assoluti, scendete in un campo assolutamente ostile al vostro, per difendere apertamente ed energicamente i diritti di coloro che scioperano contro la crudele ingordigia della plutocrazia, contro la concorrenza dei crumiri, contro le violenze dei poliziotti.

Eppure coloro che scioperano non sono tutto il proletariato, ma una piccola parte del proletariato (la parte privilegiata). E una parte, ripeto, che è agli antipodi delle vostre idee.

Perchè voi — secondo il contenuto idealistico delle dottrine che dite di professare — tendete al completo miglioramento di tutte, indistintamente, le creature oppresse (e ce ne sono centinaia di milioni fuori delle unioni); mentre gli unionisti, che scioperano, non tendono che al loro esclusivo miglioramento materiale.

Voi vi agitate per la distruzione delle plutocrazie, poichè siete convinti, e non a torto, che da siffatta distruzione dipende la soluzione dell'intera questione sociale. Gli

unionisti, invece, appena ottenuto il miglioramento materiale per il quale hanno scioperato, s'acquetano come il famoso Cerbero dantesco.

Cerbero, fiera crudele e diversa,
Con tre gole caninamente latra
sovra la gente che quivi è sommersa.[1]

. . . . . .

Quando ci scorse Cerbero, il gran vermo,
le bocche aperse, e mostrocci le sanne;
non avea membro che tenesse fermo.

E il duca mio[2] distese le sue spanne,
prese la terra, e con piene le pugna
la gettò dentro alle bramose canne.

Qual è quel cane che abbaiando agugna,
e si racqueta poi che il pasto morde,
che solo a divorarlo intende e pugna:

Cotai si fecer quelle facce lorde
dello dimonio Cerbero che introna
l'anime sì, ch'esser vorrebber sorde.

E quando credono d'essere pagati bene, essi — gli unionisti — non combattono più i plutocrati. Ne riconoscono anzi la legittima esistenza. Li consolidano, li ingrassano sempre più. Arrivano perfino ad ammirarli, a magnificarli, a idolatrarli. Lo si può vedere in mille casi. Io, per amore di brevitá, ne cito qui solamente due, davvero tipici. Uno, comprovante la mia prima affermazione (gli unionisti s'acquetano egoisticamente dopo che hanno ottenuto l'aumento di paga per il quale hanno scioperato). L'altro, comprovante la mia seconda affermazione (gli unionisti, quando credono d'essere pagati bene, riconoscono la legittima esistenza della plutocrazia, sia pure indirettamente; ingrassano sempre più i plutocrati, sia pure involontariamente; li ammirano, li magnificano, li idolatrano, sia pure ipocritamente).

[1] Sopra gli epicurei e i golosi del terzo cerchio infernale (*Divina Commedia*, Inferno, canto VI).
[2] Virgilio.

Primo caso. Gli unionisti che lavorano nella grande manifattura d'abiti da uomo Hart, Schaffner e Marx di Chicago, Illinois (Stati Uniti d'America) un bel giorno scioperano per ottenere un aumento di paga. Hart, Schaffner & Marx aumentano la paga, secondo i desiderata degli scioperanti. Costoro, sodisfatti, ritornano al lavoro. Da allora in poi non si fanno più vivi, non si movono più, nemmeno quando i loro compagni d'unione, cioè gli altri sarti di Chicago, ridotti agli estremi, scioperano compatti e lottano disperatamente parecchie settimane per ottenere anch'essi dalle altre sartorie locali un qualsiasi aumento di paga.[1]

Secondo caso. Gli operai del fabbricante d'automobili Henry Ford di Detroit, Michigan (Stati Uniti d'America) credono—beati loro! — d'essere da lui pagati bene. Ma ciò non impedisce che il munifico plutocrate accresca di milioni e milioni di dollari all'anno la sua immensa ricchezza personale ammassata (vedete miracolo!) sul lavoro degli operai ch'egli paga *bene*.

D'altra parte, gli unionisti non arrivano neppure, in fin dei conti, a conseguire essi stessi i benefici per i quali hanno scioperato.

Quando i plutocrati cedono, aumentando la paga agli scioperanti, costoro credono d'avere vinto. Ma non si tratta che d'una semplice illusione. La verità è tutt'altra. Ed è che i plutocrati non pérdono mai. Quello ch'essi dánno con una mano, a causa degli scioperi da loro perduti, se lo riprendono subito con l'altra. E se lo riprendono al doppio, o moltiplicato (essi — i plutocrati — sanno benissimo l'aritmetica; non sanno altro, intellettualmente parlando, che l'aritmetica).

Un esempio. I minatori di carbone scioperano per ottenere un aumento di paga. I plutocrati — padroni delle miniere — cedono, aumentando la paga. Ma essi, dopo, vendono il carbone agli stessi minatori con un aumento di prezzo corrispondente o superiore all'aumento di paga che

[1] Durante lo sciopero di Chicago del 1915, al quale alludo, risultò che alcune sartine non ricevevano dai loro padroni più di $1.75 alla settimana. Con questa paga, esse dovevano spendere dieci soldi al giorno per solo tranvai.

lo sciopero li ha costretti ad accordare. Senza contare che un siffatto aumento di paga, sapientemente trasformato dai plutocrati in aumento di prezzo, va a cadere pure sulle spalle degli unionisti delle altre categorie di lavoratori che non hanno scioperato; va a cadere pure sulle spalle dei proletari che non possono o non vogliono appartenere alle unioni; va a cadere, insomma, sulle spalle dell'eterno asino utile, paziente e bastonato che è il popolo.

E gli altri inconvenienti che nascono dagli scioperi, chi è che li soffre? Non certo i plutocrati, ma i giusti per i peccatori. Nello sciopero dei sarti di Chicago del 1915, di cui ho fatto menzione più su, ho conosciuto parecchi scioperanti che allo scoppiar dello sciopero non avevano in tasca neppure un soldo. I poveretti, durante le lunghe settimane dello sciopero, non ricevettero nessunissimo sussidio dall'unione alla quale appartenevano; sì che furono costretti a languir di fame insieme con le loro famigliuole, mentre ai plutocrati (i padroni manifatturieri che resistevano allo sciopero) non mancarono — come prima dello sciopero, come sempre — i pranzi e le cene luculliane. Si raccolse, è vero, in quell'occasione, una certa somma di denaro (poche migliaia di dollari) per soccorrere gli scioperanti. Ma siffatta elemosina, proveniente in gran parte da privati non certo proletari, e accettata non so con quale coerenza di princípi e con quale dignità dai *leaders* dello sciopero, fu inadeguata ai bisogni degli scioperanti, anche perchè distribuita con criteri tutt'altro che equi, per non dir peggio.

Ora se voi, astensionisti assoluti, prendete parte attiva agli scioperi parziali per aiutare i lavoratori unionisti, i quali, in sostanza, non sono altro che la minoranza privilegiata del proletariato, come la plutocrazia non è altro che la minoranza privilegiata della borghesia, a maggior ragione dovreste prendere parte attiva alle guerre che si combattono per aiutare le nazioni deboli contro le cupidige delle nazioni forti, alle guerre che rassomigliano, molto più degli scioperi, alle rivoluzioni che voi vorreste fare.

Tanto più che voi, teoricamente, combattete le unioni dei lavoratori; mentre, teoricamente, difendete le nazioni

deboli. Combattete teoricamente i lavoratori unionisti, ma li aiutate praticamente negli scioperi contro i loro oppressori. Difendete teoricamente le nazioni deboli, ma non le aiutate praticamente nelle guerre contro i loro oppressori. Insomma predicate una cosa, e ne fate un'altra.

Quanto sia nocivo un siffatto procedere al progresso umano, alla vostra stessa causa, ben potete immaginarlo se considerate che, aiutando gli unionisti negli scioperi, voi non distruggete le forze positive delle plutocrazie, ma le ingrandite, le perpetuate; mentre, aiutando le nazioni deboli nelle guerre, voi distruggete le forze positive delle plutocrazie, o, se non le distruggete, certamente le minate, incominciate a distruggerle. Che è quanto dire.

I gruppi che, ispirandosi alle dottrine individualistiche, s'affannano ad arrivare, per mezzo degli scioperi parziali, dove s'arriva pestando l'acqua nel mortaio, mentre, d'altra parte, s'ostinano in un'inerzia verbosa e virulenta contro chi, volente o nolente, si trova travolto nella guerra che è destinata a segnare nel campo sociale una nuova grande epoca storica, la più grande epoca storica, sono gruppi che si mettono fuori della vita, contro la vita e, per conseguenza, fuori dell'umanità che ama la vita, contro l'umanità che è la vita.

Essi subiranno, per colpa loro stessa, la fatale legge dell'eliminazione. Periranno.

Astensionisti assoluti, ponderate queste verità.

Il popolo italiano pensò che la tesi dell'astensionismo condizionale (guerra per sola difesa nazionale) e la tesi dell'astensionismo assoluto (guerra in nessun caso), messe in pratica, avrebbero ricacciato l'umanità nel caos primitivo dalla barbarie, in cui non regnava altra forza che quella bruta; avrebbero scalzato, dalle fondamenta, ogni idea di giustizia e di civiltà.

Perchè i prepotenti, per sempre maggiore sete di ricchezza e di dominio, potrebbero commettere a lor piacimento ogni sorta di delitti, sicuri dell'impunità. Chi infatti li punirebbe, se i popoli delle nazioni estranee alle guerre volute dalle nazioni forti che hanno torto, contro

le nazioni deboli che hanno ragione, non si rendessero praticamente solidali con queste ultime?

E il non intervenire prima del male, per gridar pace dopo commesso il male, sarebbe un bel comodo per gli scellerati coronati e non coronati. In tal modo, il padrone d'una miniera potrebbe benissimo, per esempio, fare assassinare dai suoi poliziotti i minatori scioperanti, le loro mogli e i loro bambini; poi chiederebbe la pace, e tutto finirebbe lì. Proprio come quella tale religione che dice all'uomo: "Commetti tutti i peccati che vuoi; poi preséntati ai piedi del confessore ch'io tengo a tua disposizione, e tutto ti sarà da lui perdonato in nome del Dio ch'egli rappresenta sulla Terra".

Che bella festa! Che bella cuccagna! E come si potrebbe più vivere così?

Lo splendido esempio di pratica solidarietà umana che il popolo italiano diede, imponendo al governo di Vittorio Emanuele III l'intervento armato dell'Italia nella grande guerra in difesa delle nazioni deboli aggredite dalle nazioni forti, sia ponderato e imitato dagli altri popoli.

Esso — il detto esempio — dimostrò a luce meridiana come sia possibile, anzi facile, l'alleanza spirituale dei popoli.

Purchè si ravvedano lealmente del loro errore gli astensionisti condizionali e gli astensionisti assoluti.

Certo, l'alleanza spirituale dei popoli non distruggerà in ventiquattr'ore le forze brute del militarismo.

Ma ritorcendo abilmente ed energicamente siffatte forze contro le plutocrazie che le possiedono, essa — l'alleanza spirituale dei popoli — potrà impedire subito le guerre.

Non si ripetano, per carità, i vecchi ritornelli: "Questa guerra sarà l'ultima. Questa guerra segnerà la fine del militarismo. Dopo questa guerra, avremo la pace universale permanente".

Concludo.

Finchè esisteranno le plutocrazie industriali nazionaliste con le relative competizioni commerciali tra le nazioni, esisterà il militarismo e ci saranno le guerre.

Perchè il militarismo (il militarismo odierno, s'intende) non è altro che un organismo creato e mantenuto dalle

plutocrazie per difendere gl'interessi infiniti delle plutocrazie, lo sviluppo infinito delle plutocrazie, il dominio infinito delle plutocrazie.

Le plutocrazie sono la causa. Il militarismo è l'effetto. Si può distruggere l'effetto senza prima distruggere la causa?

E si possono impedire le guerre con la sola predicazione della pace, continuando a genuflettersi ai piedi dei potentati?

La guerra esiste dacchè esiste l'uomo.

La pace si prédica dacchè esiste la guerra.

Ma la predicazione della pace non potè mai impedire la guerra, perchè la guerra è un fatto materiale, è azione; mentre la predicazione della pace è un fatto immateriale, è parola.

Se la predicazione della pace avesse potuto impedire la guerra, l'avrebbe già impedita dal primo giorno, o durante i secoli, in cui essa — la predicazione della pace — si contrappose alla guerra.

E non si può aspettare che la guerra sia impedita dagli stessi potentati, perchè la guerra è la vita dei potentati. E i potentati non sono così teneri, e neanche così stolti, da sacrificare la loro vita per i begli occhi sempliciotti della pace.

La guerra sarà impedita, soltanto quando la predicazione della pace si trasmuterà in alleanza spirituale dei popoli; soltanto quando la predicazione della pace si trasformerà in intervento armato dei popoli (alleati spiritualmente tra loro) in difesa delle nazioni deboli che hanno ragione, aggredite dalle nazioni forti che hanno torto.

Soltanto allora il purissimo sangue della gioventù italiana, della gioventù di tutto il mondo, che da tre anni scorre a torrenti sui campi della vecchia Europa, potrà seriamente preludiare alla pace universale. Alla pace universale duratura tanto bramata dall'umanità, tanto necessaria all'umanità.

VIII

Il tradimento.

Dove fu dunque il tradimento che il popolo italiano commise a danno dell'Austria e della Germania, rompenda il trattato della Triplice Alleanza ed entrando in guerra o favore della Serbia, del Belgio, della Francia, dell'Inghilterra e della Russia?

In primo luogo bisogna sfatare la leggenda che il governo monarchico dei Savoia in Italia sia un governo costituzionale rappresentativo; che il re sia niente, o meno che niente; che i rappresentanti del popolo — i deputati al Parlamento nazionale — sieno tutto.

Il governo monarchico dei Savoia in Italia è — se non di nome, certo di fatto — un governo eminentemente assoluto, dispotico. Il re è tutto. E i rappresentanti del popolo non sono che un bel niente.

Il re d'Italia — in forza dello Statuto (Legge fondamentale dello Stato), che è ancóra oggi quello stesso promulgato da Carlo Alberto il 4 marzo 1848 — ha il diritto di dirigere personalmente, o a mezzo dei suoi ministri che è lo stesso [1], tutta la politica estera della nazione.[2]

Di tale diritto i Savoia s'avvalsero pur troppo. Se ne avvalse più di tutti il presente re Vittorio Emanuele III, a dispetto dei cortigiani e degl'ingenui che sempre lo dipinsero e lo decantarono come il più democratico sovrano d'Europa.

Vittorio Emanuele III, infatti, rinnovò nel 1912 il trattato d'alleanza con l'Austria e la Germania (il trattato della Triplice Alleanza) per la durata d'altri 12 anni, senza

[1] L'articolo 65 dello Statuto dice:
"Il Re nomina e revoca i suoi Ministri".

[2] L'articolo 5 dello Statuto dice:
"Al Re solo appartiene il potere esecutivo. Egli è il Capo supremo dello Stato: comanda tutte le forze di terra e di mare: dichiara la guerra: fa i trattati di pace, d'alleanza, di commercio ed altri, dandone notizia alle Camere tosto che l'interesse e la sicurezza dello Stato il permettano, ed unendovi le comunicazioni opportune. I trattati che importassero un onere alle finanze, o variazione di territorio dello Stato, non avranno effetto se non dopo ottenuto l'assenso delle Camere."

punto consultare i deputati al Parlamento nazionale eletti dal popolo, senza il loro assenso, contro la volontà del popolo, contro gli stessi interessi della nazione.

Vittorio Emanuele III dichiarò e diresse la guerra coloniale del 1911–1912 contro la Turchia, senza punto consultare i deputati al Parlamento nazionale eletti dal popolo, senza il loro assenso, contro la volontà del popolo. E solo a pace conclusa, egli — Vittorio Emanuele III — si degnò annunziare ai rappresentanti del popolo, vale a dire al popolo, che la Libia (Tripolitania e Cirenaica) era stata conquistata e, con regio decreto, proclamata provincia italiana.

E non solo la politica estera, ma benanche la politica interna della nazione è diretta personalmente dal re in Italia.

Gli onorevoli rappresentanti del popolo discutono e approvano le leggi della nazione, è vero. Ma tali leggi non possono andare in vigore, se prima non sono discusse e approvate dal Senato e sanzionate dal re medesimo [1].

Cos'è il Senato in Italia? Il Senato in Italia non è altro che una diretta rappresentanza del re. I senatori, infatti, non sono eletti dal popolo. Essi sono nominati dal re, e nominati a vita, tra gente provata, ligia, fedele alla Corona. Ex deputati monarchici, ministri di Stato, ambasciatori, magistrati, generali, ammiragli, alti funzionari amministrativi, plutocrati. Solo una piccola minoranza è dal re nominata, e non senza cautele, tra le più cospicue figure intellettuali della nazione [2]. Ma questa minoranza

[1] L'articolo 7 dello Statuto dice:
"Il Re solo sanziona le leggi e le promulga."

[2] L'articolo 33 dello Statuto dice:
"Il Senato è composto di membri nominati a vita dal Re, in numero non limitato, aventi l'età di quarant'anni compiuti, e scelti nelle categorie seguenti:
1. Gli Arcivescovi e Vescovi dello Stato;
2. Il Presidente della Camera dei Deputati;
3. I Deputati dopo tre Legislature, o sei anni di esercizio;
4. I Ministri di Stato;
5. I Ministri Segretari di Stato;
6. Gli Ambasciatori;
7. Gl'Inviati Straordinari, dopo tre anni di tali funzioni;
8. I Primi Presidenti e Presidenti del Magistrato di Cassazione e della Camera dei Conti;

non interviene quasi mai alle sedute del Senato; non prende parte quasi mai alle deliberazioni del Senato; non s'interessa quasi mai della politica attiva della nazione. È una minoranza astratta, nominata dal re per gettare polvere negli occhi al popolo, più che per altro.

Si obietterà:

Ma tra i deputati eletti dal popolo e i senatori nominati dal re non sorsero mai divergenze. Non si rese mai incompatibile l'istituto parlamentare impersonato dagli uni, con l'istituto parlamentare impersonato dagli altri. Il Senato approvò sempre le leggi discusse e votate dalla Camera dei deputati.

È vero. Ma perchè?

Perchè la maggioranza dei deputati è composta, al pari della maggioranza dei senatori, di gente provata, ligia, fedele alla Corona. È anch'essa una maggioranza nominata dal re.

"E come?"

Lo dico subito, a edificazione dei cortigiani e degl'ingenui, i quali s'ostinano a dipingere e decantare la Camera dei deputati d'Italia come una diretta, genuina, autentica rappresentanza del popolo italiano.

9. I Primi Presidenti dei Magistrati di Appello;
10. L'Avvocato Generale presso il Magistrato di Cassazione e della Camera dei Conti, dopo cinque anni di funzioni;
11. I Presidenti di Classe dei Magistrati di Appello, dopo tre anni di funzioni;
12. I Consiglieri del Magistrato di Cassazione e della Camera dei Conti, dopo cinque anni di funzioni;
13. Gli Avvocati Generali o Fiscali Generali presso i Magistrati di Appello, dopo cinque anni di funzioni;
14. Gli Uffiziali Generali di Terra e di Mare. Tuttavia i Maggiori Generali e i Contr'Ammiragli dovranno avere da cinque anni quel grado di attività;
15. I Consiglieri di Stato, dopo cinque anni di funzioni;
16. I Membri dei Consigli di Divisione, dopo tre elezioni alla loro Presidenza;
17. Gli Intendenti Generali, dopo sette anni di esercizio;
18. I Membri della Regia Accademia delle Scienze, dopo sette anni di nomina;
19. I Membri ordinari del Consiglio superiore d'Istruzione pubblica, dopo sette anni di esercizio;
20. Coloro che con servizî o meriti eminenti avranno illustrata la Patria;
21. Le persone che da tre anni pagano tremila lire d'imposizione diretta in ragione dei loro beni o della loro industria."

L'articolo 34 dello Statuto dice:

"I Principi della Famiglia Reale fanno di pieno diritto parte del Senato. Essi seggono immediatamente dopo il Presidente. Entrano in Senato a ventun'anno, ed hanno voto a venticinque."

L'articolo 35 dello Statuto dice:

"Il Presidente e i Vice Presidenti del Senato sono nominati dal Re."

Nelle elezioni politiche, nelle elezioni cioè dei deputati al Parlamento nazionale, il governo italiano presenta sempre, in quasi tutti i 508 collegi elettorali del Regno, i suoi candidati monarchici, in contrapposizione dei candidati che sono antimonarchici o non abbastanza monarchici.

Per fare eleggere siffatti candidati, esso — il governo italiano — mette febbrilmente in moto tutti gli ufficiali polizieschi dello Stato (dai più alti ai più bassi). E, da costoro, fa profondere, in mezzo alle masse elettorali, i milioni di lire dei cosidetti fondi segreti, smunti dalle tasche dei contribuenti, dalle vene del popolo; fa profondere promesse d'impieghi e di favori; fa insomma corrompere, senza veruno scrupolo. E dove non può con la corruzione, esso — il governo italiano — fa minacciare, fa commettere ogni sorta di soprusi e di violenze. In una delle ultime elezioni generali politiche, per esempio, l'allora presidente dei ministri e ministro degl'interni — Giovanni Giolitti — mandò in Sicilia perfino le navi da guerra, per intimidire (e non solo intimidire!), coi cannoni di grosso calibro, quegli elettori che s'erano mostrati poco propensi a votare per i candidati del governo.

Ora, una Camera eletta con sistemi governativi tanto arbitrari, disonesti, infami, può essa chiamarsi, in coscienza, una vera rappresentanza del popolo? Non è essa, piuttosto (eccetto la piccola minoranza eletta dagli elettori ribelli che il governo non può in nessun modo coartare), una rappresentanza, sia pure indiretta, del re? E può essa aver mai, nel suo seno, una maggioranza che si trovi, qualche volta, in serio disaccordo col Senato?

Scoppiata nell'estate del 1914 la grande guerra, Vittorio Emanuele III, che non poteva, per ragioni facili a comprendersi, agire direttamente, chiamò in fretta e furia i politicanti italiani a lui più devoti (Giolitti a capo di tutti, come il più influente e il più astuto), e comandò loro di moversi, agitarsi, fare il possibile per creare nella nazione una corrente favorevole agl'Imperi Centrali, per indurre il popolo italiano a rispettare il trattato della Triplice Alleanza, schierandosi senz'altro dalla parte dell'Austria e della Germania.

Il popolo italiano ignorava il contenuto del trattato della Triplice Alleanza, poichè il re non aveva sentito il dovere di comunicarglielo. Ma, per notizie pubblicate dai giornali, esso — il popolo italiano — era riuscito a sapere che il trattato stesso conteneva una clausola basica esclusivamente difensiva.

E allora perchè il re desiderava che l'Italia scendesse in campo per difendere l'Austria e la Germania in una guerra offensiva?

Il popolo italiano volle vederci chiaro. E seppe che Vittorio Emanuele III desiderava ad ogni costo l'intervento dell'Italia nella grande guerra a fianco dell'Austria e della Germania, per i seguenti motivi:

Primo. Per solidarietà dinastica verso gli Hohenzollern. Questa dinastia — per avere fondato, il 18 gennaio 1871, l'Impero germanico: per avere dato a siffatto Impero un impulso, una potenza, una saldezza senza pari — era considerata, almeno fino allo scoppio della grande guerra, come il prototipo delle dinastie militarmente imperialiste del mondo. La dinastia di Savoia, anch'essa militarmente imperialista, non poteva che sentirsi irresistibilmente attratta verso la sua consorella prototipo. Il simile ama il suo simile. Non poteva che sentire il bisogno d'imitarla. La dinastia inglese di Brunswick e la dinastia russa dei Romanow erano troppo legate alla Francia repubblicana.

Secondo. Perchè la casa di Savoia era ed è imparentata con le case regnanti d'Austria e di Germania. Infatti Vittorio Emanuele II, primo re d'Italia, nonno del presente re Vittorio Emanuele III, sposò Maria Adelaide, figlia di Giuseppe Ranieri arciduca d'Austria e vicerè austriaco del Lombardo-Veneto dal 1818 al 1848. E questo stesso arciduca Ranieri aveva sposato, nel 1820, Elisabetta di Savoia-Carignano sorella di Carlo Alberto. E la vivente regina Margherita, vedova del secondo re d'Italia Umberto I e madre del presente re Vittorio Emanuele III, nacque dalla principessa Maria Elisabetta, figlia del re Giovanni di Sassonia. E il vivente principe Tommaso[1], fratello della

[1] Il principe Tommaso è l'attuale luogotenente di Vittorio Emanuele III, cioè l'attuale vicerè d'Italia.

regina Margherita e zio del presente re Vittorio Emanuele III, sposò Maria Isabella, figlia del principe Adalberto di Baviera.

Terzo. Per amicizia personale verso Guglielmo II. Sono ben note in Italia, anzi in tutta l'Europa, le intime relazioni d'amicizia corse tra Guglielmo II di Germania e Umberto I e Margherita di Savoia, genitori del presente re Vittorio Emanuele III, e tra lo stesso Guglielmo II e lo stesso Vittorio Emanuele III.

Quarto. Per interessi finanziari privati. I giornali nord-americani, ed anche qualche giornale d'Italia, pubblicarono che il presente re d'Italia Vittorio Emanuele III aveva investita la somma di cento e più milioni di lire di sua privata pertinenza nella casa germanica Krupp (nella casa che produce migliaia di cannoni all'anno e caldaie, corazze, vagoni, locomotive, elettromotori; nella casa che possiede cantieri, piroscafi, miniere di ferro, di carbon fossile, ecc.).

Quinto. Per simpatia verso il popolo tedesco. Molti uomini nutrirono e nutrono ancóra oggi simpatia per il popolo tedesco. Perchè non avrebbe potuto nutrirla anche Vittorio Emanuele III? Forse ch'egli non era e non è un uomo soggetto a sentimenti e a passioni come tutti gli altri uomini?

Sesto. Perchè egli — Vittorio Emanuele III — credeva che l'intervento dell'Italia nella grande guerra a fianco dell'Austria e della Germania avvantaggiasse la nazione. Molti cittadini italiani privati credettero e credono tuttavia lo stesso. Perchè non avrebbe potuto crederlo anche Vittorio Emanuele III? Forse ch'egli non godeva e non gode i diritti che godono tutti gli altri cittadini italiani?

Settimo. Per qualche trattato segreto in base al quale Vittorio Emanuele III, Guglielmo II e Francesco Giuseppe s'obbligavano d'aiutarsi militarmente a vicenda anche in caso di guerra offensiva. Che un simile trattato ci sia stato, si desume logicamente dal fatto che l'imperatore Guglielmo II — per quanto conscio della strapotenza militare germanica: per quanto ambizioso, audace, pazzo — non avrebbe giammai incoraggiato l'imperatore Francesco Giuseppe a

provocare la più pericolosa delle guerre (pericolosa per la stessa Germania), se egli — Guglielmo II — non fosse stato più che sicuro dell'aiuto incondizionato e illimitato dell'Italia. Nè lo stesso Francesco Giuseppe, per quanto senilmente cocciuto, si sarebbe spinto, come si spinse, fino agli estremi contro la piccola Serbia.

Giolitti, ch'era debitore alla dinastia di Savoia d'un quindicennio di dittatura governativa, obbedì ai comandi del suo re. E, seguíto dai suoi satelliti, cominciò a lavorare. Percorse e ripercorse — con misteriosa circospezione e di notte, più che di giorno — tutte le vie della capitale. Salì e scese scale. Confabulò coi più equivoci figuri indigeni e stranieri. Sudò dozzine di camicie. Ma la sua influenza e la sua astuzia, per quanto sostenute dall'autorità personale del sovrano, erano da politicone troppo bacato, erano da volpone troppo invecchiato. Epperò non sortirono l'effetto che in alto si desiderava. Sortirono, invece, un effetto tutto contrario. Infatti il popolo italiano, dopo un referendum riservatissimo indetto dal governo tra i soldati di terra e di mare, rispose fieramente ch'esso non si sarebbe battuto per la Germania e per l'Austria, specialmente per l'Austria, neanche se gliel'avesse comandato Domeneddio in persona. Non solo, ma impose al re la rottura del trattato d'alleanza con le dette due nazioni; impose la dichiarazione di neutralità dell'Italia nelle grande guerra; si diede a manifestare apertamente e fortemente le sue simpatie per le nazioni aggredite dagli eserciti di Francesco Giuseppe e di Guglielmo II.

Vittorio Emanuele III — vista e considerata, con animo alquanto preoccupato, l'impossibilità d'intervenire nella grande guerra a favore della Germania e dell'Austria — chiamò novamente a sè Giolitti. E gli comandò di moversi, agitarsi, fare del suo meglio per indurre il popolo italiano a mantenere almeno la neutralità, a non abbandonarsi a sentimentalismi esagerati e dannosi.

Giolitti, ch'era debitore alla dinastia di Savoia d'un quindicennio di dittatura governativa, obbedì ai comandi del suo re. E, seguíto dai suoi satelliti, si ringolfò nel

lavoro con più zelo, se non con più fede, di prima. Riordì intrighi, tenebrosi intrighi. Si spinse, sicuro dell'immunità, fino ad atti più che illeciti.

Ma, col passar dei giorni, il popolo italiano vide che la piccola Serbia era schiacciata; vide che il piccolo Belgio era schiacciato; vide che la Francia repubblicana stava per essere schiacciata; vide che l'Inghilterra e la Russia erano sul punto d'essere anch'esse schiacciate; vide che l'Europa intera correva rischio di cadere schiava ai piedi del plutocratico militarismo teutonico. E allora, esso — il popolo italiano — chiese al governo del re l'intervento armato dell'Italia nelle grande guerra, contro i tirannici aggressori.

Vittorio Emanuele III — vista e considerata, con l'anima piena d'amaritudine, l'impossibilità di mantenere a lungo la neutralità dell'Italia — chiamò novamente a sè Giolitti. E gli comandò di moversi, agitarsi, fare ciò che la disperazione del momento richiedeva, per frenare gli ardori bellici del popolo italiano.

Giolitti, ch'era debitore alla dinastia di Savoia d'un quindicennio di dittatura governativa, obbedì ai comandi del suo re. E, seguíto dai suoi satelliti, si precipitò ancóra una volta a capofitto nei bassi fondi della diplomazia. Ivi, strisciando con una viltà senza pari, diè principio a quei famosi *pour parler* col principe von Bulow, che dovevano ben presto — i *pour parler* — diventare l'anello intermedio delle trattative che il governo di Vienna, auspice Guglielmo II, aveva già intavolato col governo di Roma, allo scopo di *comprare*, per mezzo di concessioni territoriali e di milioni di lire, la neutralità permanente dell'Italia.[1]

[1] La responsabilità personale di Vittorio Emanuele III nei mali passi di Giolitti, emersa da fatti ormai passati nel dominio della storia, non può essere distrutta dai soliti sofismi.

Bisogna esser logici! Bisogna, sopratutto, che il popolo italiano — se vuole che gli stranieri lo rispettino veramente — s'abitui a dir pane al pane e vino al vino nelle questioni d'interesse nazionale. Bisogna, cioè, che il popolo italiano si liberi una buona volta dal pregiudizio legalizzato dall'articolo 4 dello Statuto Albertino che dice: "La persona del Re è sacra e inviolabile".

Giolitti, per quanto politicamente losco, non poteva agire, come agì, per conto proprio, nel momento in cui la nuova Italia s'accingeva a fare il suo più arduo passo nella vita del mondo.

Giolitti — da privato, da deputato, da ministro, da presidente dei ministri — fu sempre un fautore arrabbiato della politica monarchica italiana la più militarista. Come poteva egli, all'improvviso, lavorare sinceramente per la pace?

Si giunse così fino agli ultimi d'aprile del 1915.

Nei primi di maggio del detto anno rimpatriò dalla Francia Gabriele d'Annunzio.

Il poeta, che dall'esilio aveva seguíto con dantesca foscoliana mazziniana ansietà lo svolgersi degli avvenimenti in Italia, si schierò immediatamente dalla parte del popolo. E affrontò con coraggio, risolutezza ed energia mirabili i nemici interni ed esterni della sua patria (i ruffiani, i barattieri e simile lordura). E li smascherò, li sferzò, li bollò a sangue.

Allora da milioni di petti eruppe vulcanicamente il grido di guerra.

Vittorio Emanuele III tremò.

Egli comprese che la sua suprema ora storica era suonata. Il trono gli vacillava sotto i piedi. Un'ulteriore resistenza neutralista l'avrebbe irremissibilmente perduto.

La mattina del 23 maggio 1915, egli — a mezzo del suo ambasciatore a Vienna, duca d'Avarna — dichiarò guerra a Francesco Giuseppe d'Austria.

Così l'Italia entrò nell'immane macello.

Ma il popolo italiano, con tale entrata, non commise nessun tradimento.

Il popolo italiano impose la rottura del trattato della

Giolitti fu sempre dalla parte delle maggioranze parlamentari e popolari, anche quando queste si trovarono dalla parte del torto. Come poteva egli, all'improvviso, passare dalla parte della minoranza, e della minoranza socialista ch'egli aveva combattuto sempre e dalla quale era stato sempre combattuto asprissimamente? Come poteva egli, maestro d'opportunismo, mettersi contro corrente?

Giolitti, come statista di mediocrissimo calibro, aveva raggiunto l'apice della grandezza politica in Italia (la presidenza dei ministri), e vi si era mantenuto più di qualsiasi altro statista. Alla vigilia dell'entrata in guerra dell'Italia, egli era ancóra l'árbitro supremo del Parlamento nazionale italiano, della vita politica italiana. Perchè doveva egli arrischiare una tale posizione, quando il rischio, anche se riuscito, non avrebbe potuto mai dargli una posizione più alta?

Giolitti, durante il suo lungo potere governativo, era riuscito a formarsi una posizione finanziaria più che solida. E poteva ancóra continuare, con la massima faciltà, ad ammassar denari, senza dar troppo nell'occhio. Perchè doveva egli, quasi pubblicamente, vendersi com'un pezzente qualunque agli agenti dell'Austria e della Germania, quando una tale vendita costituiva — ed egli lo sapeva bene — la sua completa rovina morale?

Giolitti, da perfetto servitore, non fece altro che sacrificarsi al padrone che l'aveva tanto beneficato. Egli preferì chiudere ibridamente la sua ibrida vita pubblica, piuttosto che commettere, nel momento della più dura prova (dura prova per Vittorio Emanuele III) un atto d'ingratitudine contro il suo re; piuttosto che compromettere la persona "sacra e inviolabile" del suo re.

Questa è la verità.

Triplice Alleanza, perchè il trattato stesso non era stato stipulato nè approvato da lui: dal popolo.

Si obietterà:

Un popolo, il quale si fa governare da un re e da uno statuto, deve necessariamente rispettare gli atti che il detto re compie in base al detto Statuto.

È vero. Ma bisogna pur considerare che il popolo italiano, imponendo la rottura del trattato della Triplice Alleanza stipulato dal re, e agendo in opposizione a quanto il trattato stesso stabiliva, dimostrò chiaro e tondo ch'esso — il popolo italiano — non intendeva seguire più la vecchia via (fatto, questo, oltremodo significativo); dimostrò ch'esso — il popolo italiano — è disposto a rispettare il re e lo Statuto, soltanto quando l'uno e l'altro sanno rendersi interpreti dei bisogni e della volontà della nazione, non quando essi — il re e lo Statuto — si rivelano, massime nella pratica e nei momenti più gravi e decisivi della vita della patria e del mondo, contrari ai sentimenti e agl' interessi nazionali del popolo stesso, contrari ai suoi ideali umani.

Del resto, neanche Vittorio Emanuele III, in ultima analisi, commise un tradimento vero e proprio, rompendo il trattato della Triplice Alleanza e dichiarando guerra all'Austria: per la semplice ragione ch'egli, quando stipulò il trattato stesso, non poteva prevedere la levata di scudi del popolo italiano.

Vittorio Emanuele III, quando stipulò il trattato della Triplice Alleanza, era sicuro, com'erano sicuri i suoi colleghi Francesco Giuseppe e Guglielmo II — specialmente Guglielmo II — che il popolo della nuova Italia avrebbe eseguito ciecamente la volontà del suo re, come aveva fatto sempre nel passato.

Invece il popolo della nuova Italia, che aveva sempre, è vero, rispettato ed eseguito ciecamente la volontà del suo re, si rifiutò di rispettarla ed eseguirla in occasione della grande guerra.

Ma Vittorio Emanuele III, come abbiam visto, non mancò di fare del suo meglio per richiamare all'antica obbe-

dienza il suo popolo. Appena scoppiata la grande guerra nell'estate del 1914, egli, per ottemperare agli obblighi da lui assunti verso Francesco Giuseppe e Guglielmo II, fece propagare dal fido Giolitti e dai suoi satelliti che il popolo italiano, se voleva evitare l'onta eterna del disonore, doveva rispettare i trattati, scendendo in campo a favore delle due nazioni alleate Austria e Germania. Il popolo della nuova Italia, non esclusi i soldati in mezzo ai quali si fece il referendum, rispose invece fermamente che non avrebbe giammai impugnato le armi per difendere le dette due nazioni, specialmente l'Austria. E impose la neutralità.

Vittorio Emanuele III s'affannò a mantenere almeno la neutralità. Il popolo della nuova Italia, vedendo che la neutralità avrebbe egualmente assicurato la vittoria ai due imperatori aggressori alleatisi per giunta col sultano di Turchia (altro nemico dell'Italia e della civiltà), s'agitò per l'intervento armato a favore dei popoli aggrediti.

Vittorio Emanuele III fece sforzi disperati per iscansare la suprema iattura dell'intervento. Il popolo della nuova Italia mostrò i denti.

Vittorio Emanuele III sentì che la corona gli pericolava sulla testa. Dovè piegarsi. Dovè obbedire. Dovè dichiarare la guerra all'Austria.

Come poteva fare altrimenti?

Egli si trovò per la prima volta di fronte a un popolo risvegliatosi dal letargo vergognoso in cui giaceva da lungo tempo: dal tempo, cioè, in cui l'Italia era risorta a nazione una e indipendente. Si trovò di fronte a un popolo che aveva improvvisamente ritrovata in sè la coscienza della propria forza materiale e della propria dignità morale. Si trovò di fronte a un popolo ch'era sul punto di fare la rivoluzione, allo scopo di rovesciare la monarchia e proclamare la repubblica, se egli — il re — non avesse obbedito a tamburo battente ai comandi, dico comandi, impartitigli dal popolo stesso. Si trovò di fronte a un popolo che, da pecora belante e leccante, s'era trasformato in leone ruggente e fremente, pronto ad avventarsi su chi aveva tanto abusato della sua pazienza, della sua debolezza.

Come poteva egli — Vittorio Emanuele III — prevedere

questa ira di Dio? Come poteva egli prevedere, quando strinse alleanza con Francesco Giuseppe e Guglielmo II, che il popolo della nuova Italia, mostratosi sempre docile e rassegnato verso la dinastia di Savoia, sarebbe un giorno insorto formidabilmente contro la dinastia stessa?

Vittorio Emanuele III non poteva provedere un fatto così straordinario, per la semplice ragione ch'egli, con tutta la superiore intelligenza decantatagli sempre dai cortigiani e dagl'ingenui, non era ancóra riuscito a penetrare l'anima del suo popolo. Se fosse riuscito a penetrarla, egli avrebbe facilmente capito che il popolo della nuova Italia tollerò il trattato della Triplice Alleanza, quando esso non nocque che fino a un certo punto alla nazione e all'umanità; ma che non poteva tollerarlo più, quando esso — il trattato della Triplice Alleanza — minacciò di nuocere gravissimamente alla nazione e all'umanità.

Si trattò d'uno di quei casi di forza maggiore contemplati e giustificati da tutte le leggi giuridiche del mondo, comprese quelle che sono in vigore negli stessi Stati delle loro maestà gl'imperatori di Germania e d'Austria.

Nessun tradimento, dunque, nè da parte del popolo italiano, nè da parte di Vittorio Emanuele III re d'Italia.

IX

L'oro inglese e l'oro francese.

Dove fu l'oro inglese?

Dove fu l'oro francese?

Oro ce ne fu, senza dubbio; ma da parte dei Tedeschi, non da parte degl'Inglesi e dei Francesi. Il principe von Bulow, rappresentante nel maggio del 1915 i governi di Berlino e di Vienna a Roma, ne profuse a piene mani in Italia. Ma egli non potè che corrompere qualche politicante rinnegato, qualche famelico scribacchino, qualche incallito ceffo da galera.

Lo disse e lo ripetè senza posa Gabriele d'Annunzio nelle sue terribili requisitorie di quei giorni.

Parlando al popolo di Genova nella sera del ritorno (4 maggio 1915), il poeta, tra l'altro, disse:

Che volete voi, Genovesi? Che volete voi, Italiani? menomare o crescere la nazione?

Voi volete un'Italia più grande, non per acquisto ma per conquisto, non a misura di vergogna ma a prezzo di sangue e di gloria.

Arringando il popolo di Roma accalcato nelle vie e acclamante (la sera del 12 maggio 1915), il poeta, tra l'altro, disse:

Or è cinquantacinque anni, in questa sera, in quest'ora stessa, i Mille, in marcia da Marsala verso Salemi, sostavano; e a piè dei lor fasci d'armi mangiavano il loro pane e in silenzio si addormentavano.

Avevano in cuore le stelle e la parola del Duce, che è pur viva e imperiosa oggi a noi: *Se saremo tutti uniti, sarà facile il nostro assunto. Dunque, all'armi!*

Era il proclama di Marsala; e diceva ancóra, con rude minaccia: *Chi non s'arma è un vile o un traditore.*

Non stamperebbe dell'uno e dell'altro marchio, Egli il Liberatore, se discendere potesse dal Gianicolo alla bassura, non infamerebbe Egli così quanti oggi in palese o in segreto lavorano a disarmare l'Italia, a svergognare la Patria, a ricacciarla nella condizione servile, a rinchiodarla su la sua croce?

Che la forza e lo sdegno di Roma rovescino alfine i banchi dei barattieri e dei falsarî!

Spazzate, o Romani, spazzate tutte le lordure, ricacciate nella Cloaca tutte le putredini!

Arringando il popolo di Roma in tumulto (la sera del 13 maggio 1915), il poeta, tra l'altro, disse:

Compagni, voi dovete impedire che un pugno di ruffiani e di frodatori riesca a imbrattare e a perdere l'Italia.

Il tradimento è oggi manifesto. Non ne respiriamo soltanto l'orribile odore, ma ne sentiamo già tutto il peso obbrobrioso. Nella Roma vostra si tenta di strangolare la Patria con un capestro prussiano.

Noi siamo sul punto d'essere venduti come una greggia infetta.

Questo vuol fare di noi il mestatore di Dronero [1] intruglio

[1] Dronero (provincia di Cuneo), collegio elettorale di Giolitti.

osceno. Questo vuol fare di noi quell'altro leccatore di sudici piedi prussiani [1]. Questo di noi vuol fare la loro seguace canaglia.

Questo non faranno, o Romani.

La storia vostra si fece forse nelle botteghe dei rigattieri e dei cenciaiuoli? Le bilance della vostra giustizia crollavano forse dalla banda ov'era posto un tozzo da maciullare, un osso da rodere? Il vostro Campidoglio era forse un banco di barattatori e di truffardi? La gloria vi s'affacciava e ciangottava da rivendugliola?

Non ossi, non tozzi, non cenci, non baratti, non truffe. Basta! Rovesciate i banchi! Spezzate le false bilance!

Le nostre sorti non si misurano con la spanna del merciaio, ma con la spada lunga.

E col bastone e col ceffone, con la pedata e col pugno si misurano i manutengoli e i mezzani, i leccapiatti e i leccazampe dell'ex-cancelliere tedesco (Bulow) che sopra un colle quirite fa il grosso Giove trasformandosi a volta a volta in bue tenero e in pioggia d'oro.

È necessario che non sia consumato in Roma l'assassinio della Patria. Voi me ne state mallevadori, o Romani.

Pronunziando l'accusa pubblica nell'adunanza del popolo romano la sera del 14 maggio 1915, il poeta, tra l'altro, disse:

La Patria è in pericolo, la Patria è in punto di perdimento. Per salvarla da una ruina e da una ignominia irreparabili, ciascuno di noi ha il dovere di dare tutto sè stesso e d'armarsi di tutte le armi.

In un messaggio agli studenti dell'Ateneo romano adunati per deliberare la violenza (15 maggio 1915), il poeta, tra l'altro, disse:

Oggi è l'anniversario della più bella battaglia garibaldina, è l'anniversario di Calatafimi. Di essa il Duce soleve dire: *Se nel punto del trapasso voi mi vedrete sorridere, amici, pensate che il ricordo di Calatafimi mi risale dal cuore con l'ultimo palpito.*

Ma perchè egli risorridesse, bisognerebbe celebrare questo anniversario con la cacciata del truffatore (Giolitti) che vuol vendere l'Italia e del mezzano (Bulow) che la vuol comperare. Bisognerebbe oggi purificare delle due infezioni il cielo di Roma.

Il popolo italiano, nella sua povertà pura come cristallo

[1] L'ex ministro Bertolini?

d'Alpi, rimase estraneo al turpe mercato dei Bulow e dei Giolitti.

E come poteva non rimaner estraneo, se esso si specchiò sempre nella vita d'uomini che l'oro non potè mai contaminare? d'uomini che sono il piú onesto orgoglio di razza?

Io voglio qui ricordare due episodi: un episodio antico, che s'insegna nelle scuole elementari d'Italia; un episodio dei tempi moderni, che la stampa nazionale rievoca ogni anno. L'uno e l'altro daranno un'idea delle virtù sulle quali il popolo della nuova Italia foggia con mirabile legge di continuità la sua incorruttibilità morale.

Primo episodio. Nell'estate dell'anno 282 avanti Cristo, una squadra romana, che veleggiava verso Sena-Gallica, gittò l'áncora nel porto di Taranto.

I Tarantini, col pretesto che un antico trattato vietava ai Romani di navigare oltre il Capo Licinio, assaltarono le navi ancorate, ne affondarono alcune e misero in fuga le altre.

Il Senato romano chiese subito un'adeguata riparazione ai Tarantini. Ma gli ambasciatori ch'esso all'uopo mandò, invece d'ottenere la chiesta riparazione, furono dai Tarantini bassamente oltraggiati.

Allora Roma dichiarò la guerra.

I Tarantini chiesero aiuto a Pirro re dell'Epiro. Costui, ch'era ambizioso e vago quanto mai d'avventure, non si fece molto pregare. Sbarcò a Taranto (280 avanti Cristo) con un grosso esercito e 20 elefanti trasportanti sul dorso alcune fortezze, dalle quali i soldati potevano combattere al sicuro. E scontratosi coi Romani comandati dal console P. Valerio Levino ad Eraclea presso le foci dell'Agri, ne seguì un'accanita battaglia.

I soldati romani, spaventati dall'enorme grossezza e dai barriti di quei quadrupedi ch'essi non avevano mai visto prima, si diedero alla fuga, lasciando al nemico la vittoria. Ma questa era costata tanto cara, che Pirro, pieno di meraviglia e di dispetto, esclamò: "Ancóra una vittoria come questa, e dovrò tornarmene solo in Epiro!"

Durante l'inverno, un'ambascería romana condotta da Caio Fabrizio, uomo povero ma di gran talento militare

e d'animo nobilissimo, si presentò a Pirro per trattare dello scambio dei prigionieri.

L'austera semplicità del Romano meravigliò non poco lo straniero.

Pirro, tratto in disparte Fabrizio, gli offrì preziosissimi doni, purchè promettesse d'indurre il Senato romano a far la pace.

Ma Fabrizio rispose alteramente:

Offri i tuoi doni agli schiavi, non già ad un cittadino romano. E sappi bene ch'io non mi sento povero, ma più ricco di te, perchè il mio campicello e la mia casetta mi dánno abbastanza per vivere beato.

Non potendo vincerlo con l'oro, Pirro tentò di vincere Fabrizio con la paura. Gli aizzò contro il più grosso degli elefanti, il quale, a un dato cenno, stese la proboscide sulla testa di Fabrizio e barrì spaventosamente. Il forte Romano non si scosse, non si mosse: sorrise fieramente. E quando l'elefante ebbe finito, partì senza concludere nulla sullo scambio dei prigionieri.

Pirro, stupefatto, esclamò:

Vedo che sarebbe più facile far deviare il Sole dal suo corso, che Fabrizio dal sentiero della virtu!

Ritornato a Roma, Fabrizio consigliò al Senato di non fare la pace.

Roma non dovrà scendere a patti — egli gridò — finchè soldati stranieri calcheranno il suolo d'Italia!

La guerra fu continuata. Pirro, sconfitto dai Romani comandati dal console M. Curio Dentato in un'asprissima battaglia presso Benevento, dovè riprendere per sempre la via dell'Epiro.

Secondo episodio. L'anno 1888 il governo italiano aveva bisogno di contrarre un prestito di 60 milioni di lire.

Alcuni banchieri francesi, desiderosi di combinare essi l'affare abbastanza grasso per quei tempi, tentarono di corrompere, con l'offerta d'un milione e duecentomila lire, una delle più illibate figure del Parlamento nazionale

italiano: Giovanni Bovio[1]. Per mezzo dell'autorità di questo austero deputato repubblicano, essi speravano, anzi erano sicuri, di potere influenzare il ministro delle finanze d'Italia ch'era allora Agostino Magliani.

Ma ecco come Bovio rispose al banchiere che aveva avuto l'incarico dai suoi colleghi di Francia di fare la temeraria proposta:

Napoli, 5 dicembre 1888.

Signore,

Con lettera assicurata da Parigi, in data 1° dicembre 1888 e in carta intestata col vostro nome, voi scrivete a me: *Ho l'onore d'avervi conosciuto e udito. Potete voi chiedere al ministro Magliani, se vero è che il governo italiano abbia assolutamente bisogno di collocare a breve scadenza cinquanta o sessanta milioni di buoni del Tesoro e se è vero che questa realizzazione sia naufragata in Francia? Infine a qual tasso egli vorrebbe realizzarli?*

Se sì, potete assicurare che, se il tasso è accettabile, fra otto giorni dal dì della risposta, verranno recati a Roma i cinquanta o sessanta milioni di cui egli avrebbe uopo. Come voi vedete, questo affare è dei più seri e richiede la più grande discrezione. Per incomodi e cure, se l'affare si fa, verrà messa a disposizione vostra la somma di un milione e duecentomila franchi (un milion deux cents mil francs).

La proposizione fattami indica chiaramente che voi mi avete veduto e udito, ma non mi avete conosciuto.

Per fare a me siffatta proposta, voi avete dovuto indicare ai banchieri che verranno in Roma il mio nome, e permettete che lo difenda io, che non ho altro da custodire e da trasmettere.

Lo difenderò spiegandovi in poche parole il fatto e me.

Il fatto, comunque colorito e velato, è di quelli che si chiamano *affari*, e che i deputati non debbono trattare nè coi ministri nè con uffici e compagnie dipendenti dal governo. Non c'è legge che vi si opponga, ma i fatti peggiori non sono quelli che cadono sotto le sanzioni delle leggi.

Quanto a me, nè a voi che siete stato in Napoli, nè ad altri può essere ignoto che io sostento me e la famiglia dì per dì, inse-

[1]Giovanni Bovio, uomo politico di Trani (Bari), filosofo, oratore, epigrafista e drammaturgo, spiccata figura di savio antico. All'Università di Napoli insegnò, successivamente, *Filosofia* e *Storia del diritto*, *Enciclopedia giuridica*, ecc. La sua filosofia fu un gran sogno esaltato da idealità. Autore della *Filosofia del diritto*, della *Storia del diritto in Italia*, del *Naturalismo* e di altre opere profonde. Fu in intima corrispondenza con Mazzini, Saffi, Garibaldi e con tutti gli altri grandi Italiani del suo tempo. Morì povero e incorrotto. (1841–1903.)

gnando e scrivendo filosofia, congiunta con un po' di matematica, ma con aritmetica che non è mai arrivata al milione.

Se il lavoro mi frutta l'indipendenza, il milione mi è soverchio.

Voi scrivete che tutto sarebbe fatto di cheto in Roma, senza che altri ne sappia.

E non lo saprei io? E non porto nella mia coscienza un codice?

I banchieri possono lasciare la loro coscienza a piè delle Alpi e ripigliarsela al ritorno; ma io la porto dovunque, perchè là dentro ci sono gli ultimi ideali che ho potuto salvare dalle delusioni.

Voi scrivete che è opera di buon cittadino questa mediazione; ma io vi dico che è opera di onesto uomo non far mai ciò che si ha bisogno di tacere e di coprire.

Ed ora, credete a me, che non ho da chiedere nulla e neppure da accettare. Voi non incontrerete un Italiano che non si auguri buone relazioni con la Francia, non per i buoni *affari*, ma per la buona ragione.

La democrazia italiana non è ricca: ama il decoro e la libertà della Francia, ma dall'oro francese non si fa abbagliare.

Io ed i miei amici non pronunzieremo il vostro nome qui noto e stimato; ma voi avete l'obbligo di dire ai vostri compagni che in Italia il sentimento della dignità è vivo, e se un giovane italiano, da noi educato, dovesse scegliere tra il canape austriaco e l'oro francese, senza un istante di esitanza, egli si darebbe al canape.

GIOVANNI BOVIO.

Il popolo italiano, rimanendo estraneo ai maneggi di von Bulow e di Giolitti, seguì fedelmente gli esempi tramandatigli da Fabrizio e insegnatigli da Bovio. Anzi fece di più. Incontrato per le vie di Roma, durante le tempestose giornate del maggio 1915, l'onorevole Bertolini, ex ministro di Vittorio Emanuele III, sospettato, semplicemente sospettato, d'essersi venduto ai Tedeschi, lo investì scagliandogli i più roventi improperi insieme con pugni di monete in faccia. E avrebbe linciato lo stesso Giolitti, se il vecchio "boia labbrone" (così d'Annunzio ingiuriò Giolitti) non se la fosse data a gambe protetto dalla polizia.

Gli è che il popolo della nuova Italia è un popolo intelligente, non imbelle; un popolo idealista, non utilitario; un popolo tenace, non volubile. Esso sa facilmente distinguere il vero dal falso, il bene dal male, il bello dal brutto. Abbraccia prontamente, per naturale impulso dell'animo suo

sensibilissimo, tutte le cause giuste. E una volta abbracciate, le difende con entusiasmo, con disinteresse, con fermezza.

Scoppiata nel 1914 la grande guerra, il popolo italiano seppe subito di che si trattava. E non esitò un solo istante a prendere spontaneamente la posizione che la ragione e il sentimento — ispirati l'una e l'altro dal diritto dei deboli — gl'imposero. E in tale posizione si mantenne sempre con amore e costanza incrollabili.

L'oro inglese e l'oro francese non furono che una storiella calunniosa messa fuori, per giunta assai tardivamente, dalla malafede teutonica.

Perchè bisogna fermarsi sopra una circostanza essenzialissima. Che è questa. Mentre dal luglio 1914 al maggio 1915 fervevano in Italia le lotte tra i fautori dell'intervento a favore dell'Austria e della Germania (fautori che la forza delle cose cambiò poi in neutralisti) da una parte, e i fautori dell'intervento contro l'Austria e la Germania dall'altra, parecchi dei summenzionati scribacchini furono, da alcuni giornali italiani, accusati d'essersi venduti ai Teutoni.

Gli accusati sporsero querela di diffamazione.

Ma nei pubblici dibattimenti, svoltisi dinanzi ai tribunali, i giornali accusatori provarono pienamente le loro accuse. E i giudici li dovettero assolvere; dovettero cioè assolvere i giornali accusatori, mentre gli scribacchini accusati d'essersi venduti ai Teutoni furono seppelliti sotto la valanga dell'indignazione e del disprezzo nazionali.

Non era forse quello il momento psicologico più opportuno per contrapporre alle accuse e alle prove dell'oro teutonico, le accuse e le prove dell'oro inglese e dell'oro francese?

Era certamente quello il momento!

Ma i Teutoni e i teutonici non ne approfittarono. Non si fecero avanti. Tacquero. Perchè?

Perchè oro inglese e francese non ne era corso in Italia. Se ne fosse corso, i Teutoni e i teutonici non avrebbero mancato di gridarlo ai quattro venti.

Del resto, anche l'oro inglese e francese, se fosse corso, non avrebbe fatto altro che corrompere, al pari dell'oro

teutonico, qualche politicante rinnegato, qualche famelico scribacchino, qualche incallito ceffo da galera.

Il popolo italiano, nella sua povertà pura come cristallo d'Alpi, sarebbe rimasto estraneo al turpe mercato. Esso si sarebbe ritemprato ancóra di più nelle immortali virtù dei suoi Fabrizi antichi e dei suoi Bovio moderni.

E non solo con l'oro, ma anche con altri mezzi i Teutoni tentarono di neutralizzare l'Italia, poichè non erano riusciti ad attrarla in favor loro sui campi di battaglia. Inondarono la penisola, dal luglio 1914 al maggio 1915, di giornali, bollettini, riviste, fogli volanti, libri, opuscoli, tutti in lingua italiana. E, con questa grazia di Dio, si sforzarono di dimostrare che gl'Inglesi e i Francesi avevano sempre odiato e avversato gl'Italiani, e sempre li avrebbero odiati e avversati in avvenire; mentre essi — i Tedeschi — erano stati sempre i più entusiastici ammiratori e i più sinceri amici degl'Italiani, e tali sarebbero sempre rimasti in avvenire.

Numerosi pacchi di siffatte pubblicazioni furono mandati a me direttamente in Chicago da un mio amico tedesco che tra il 1914 e il 1915 si trovava in Italia. Io, così, potei aver l'onore di leggere, tra l'altro, l'opuscolo intitolato *La verità nell'amicizia dell'Inghilterra per l'Italia* del dottor J. Lulvès stampato a Roma con la data del 1915; l'opuscolo intitolato *Italia e Francia* di Alfredo Tusti stampato anche a Roma con la data del 1915; e il *Bollettino della Guerra* (numero 30–31 del 17–30 aprile 1915) pubblicato dal dottor Fred. B. Hardt a Monaco di Baviera.

Nel primo, vidi cronologicamente enumerati i torti che gl'Inglesi fecero agl'Italiani dal 1327 fino al 1912.

Nel secondo, vidi cronologicamente enumerati i torti che i Francesi fecero agl'Italiani dal 30 marzo 1282 (data dei Vespri Siciliani) fino al 1912.

Nel terzo, vidi un articolo intitolato *La civiltà italiana e l'anima tedesca* che qui riproduco testualmente:

In Europa vi è un'affinità spirituale che dissente dalle manifestazioni dell'arte e della letteratura russa; noi Tedeschi ammiriamo le composizioni di un Dostojewski, ma lo spirito dell'anima russa rimane estraneo a noi; mentre invece Balzac ci fa pensare e sentire

insieme con lui, come una novella di Boccaccio ci fa ridere sinceramente, e i versi di Dante inalzano ed entusiasmano l'anima nostra come quella degl'Italiani stessi. Tra Romani e Germani vi è un antico rapporto di conoscenza e di memorie, per cui l'arte e la civiltà italiane sono da noi profondamente intese; noi sentiamo per l'influsso delle medesime nella nostra vita intellettuale un vivo senso di riconoscenza. L'intenso desiderio che spingeva Goethe ed i romantici verso l'Italia sopravvive in ogni cuore germanico. Non rifacciamo tutta la storia della colonizzazione romana della Germania, ma ricordiamo solamente che da quel tempo fino ad oggi l'influsso di essa è rimasto costante, attraverso tutta la storia, nel *Diritto romano*.

Il Rinascimento ha trasmesso a noi i tesori del pensiero greco e latino. Dai monasteri benedettini italiani fluì nel Medio Evo una larga corrente intellettuale e religiosa verso la Germania, il cui studio passionato verso la storia dell'arte italiana, paragonato con il culto da noi attribuito alle altre civiltà, ha sempre spinto verso di quella tutta l'attività e il desiderio di ricerca dei nostri sommi cultori dell'arte e della storia. Sarebbe troppo lungo citare qui anche solo i più importanti fra i cultori che la Germania annovera nel campo suddetto; vogliamo solo ricordare alcuni fra i più eminenti e noti a tutti. Chi ignora il nome di Winckelmann, il fondatore dell'archeologia moderna? E chi non conosce l'illustre Teodoro Mommsen e la sua storia di Roma, i lavori di Friedländer sulla storia dei costumi dei Romani, la splendida storia della città di Roma nel Medio Evo di Ferdinando Gregorovius il *cittadino di Roma*, il capolavoro di Ranke sulla storia del Papato, il *Cicerone* di Jacob Burckhardt che offre una comprensiva esposizione di tutta la storia dell'arte italiana, i lavori di Hermann Grimm sul Rinascimento e i sommi lavori di Wölffin che tiene oggi la cattedra di Riehl a Monaco?

Nè solamente allo studio della storia italiana hanno i Tedeschi rivolto il loro lavoro indefesso e la loro passione per l'Italia, ma anche nella versione dei suoi poeti e nella riproduzione dei suoi lavori. In ogni casa di un buon tedesco si trova la *Vita* di Benvenuto Cellini tradotta la prima volta da Goethe. Tra le moltissime traduzioni della *Divina Commedia*, una, che porta il pseudonimo di Philalethes, è stata fatta dal re Giovanni di Sassonia. La casa E. Diederichs di Jena sta pubblicando una ricca collezione di antichi documenti italiani, cronache e diari del Rinascimento, splendidamente tradotti; superbe edizioni di cui fino ad oggi sono uscite due serie di 12 volumi ciascuna. È un piacere per ogni Tedesco

colto prendere in mano uno di questi volumi come *Matarazzo*, *La Cronaca di Perugia*, *Napoli e gli Aragonesi*, il *Diario fiorentino* di Landucci, il *Diario di Roma* di Infessura, le *Lettere* dell'Aretino e del Bracciolini, i *Misteri fiorentini*, le *Istorie fiorentine* di Machiavelli ed altre tali rarità.

Le edizioni bibliofile dei poeti e pensatori italiani della casa editrice Insel di Lipsia, di G. Müller e von Weber di Monaco sono in Germania diffusissime; in esse, accanto a un'impeccabile traduzione del testo, segue un commento critico sempre accurato.

Altrettanto forte fu l'influsso della pittura italiana, l'unica veramente grande, sulla pittura tedesca moderna. Basti ricordare Albrecht Dürer e la sua permanenza in Venezia. Oggi ancóra i tesori raccolti nei musei d'Italia sono il sogno di molti giovani artisti tedeschi che vi si recano a cercarvi ed a trovarvi l'ispirazione. Ed in quante Corti nostre del secolo XVII e XVIII non troviamo l'impronta della genialità degli architetti e degli artisti italiani!

La Germania moderna non si occupa solamente dell'Italia classica e del Rinascimento italiano, ma anche della ricostituzione della sua unità politica, del suo sviluppo economico il quale è seguíto con vivo interesse ed è da noi altamente compreso ed apprezzato, forse perchè noi, al pari degl'Italiani, ci ricordiamo delle grandi lotte che entrambi le nazioni dovettero sostenere per raggiungere la loro unità nazionale. Con quale fine e delicata analisi Viktor Hehn nella sua opera *Paesi e popolazioni in Italia*, e P. D. Fischer nei suoi studî sulle condizioni politiche ed economiche dell'Italia, come anche l'Hofmeister nel suo lavoro *Lo sviluppo economico dei Romani*, sanno penetrare la psiche dell'anima italiana e con quanta meravigliosa chiarezza sanno valutare e apprezzare il grado di grandezza che l'Italia ha saputo raggiungere! E con quale sagacia il nostro grande storico Treitschke ha saputo penetrare l'opera e la genialità del grande statista italiano Camillo Cavour!

A migliaia e migliaia vanno ogni anno i Tedeschi nella penisola, attratti dalle magiche bellezze di natura e dai capolavori d'arte che l'Italia possiede, e tutti ritornano, dopo quel soggiorno troppo breve, coll'anima inebriata dalla suggestiva e straordinaria bellezza del paese, traboccante il cuore e il pensiero delle infinite meravigliose bellezze della classica Italia, con l'orecchio ancóra vibrante dell'eco armoniosa dei discorsi intavolati con un qualunque gentile compagno di viaggio o di mensa. Soltanto i Tedeschi, osiamo affermarlo, portano via dall'Italia tante fruttuose impres-

sioni della terra che li affascina, della culla della civiltà europea! Il Francese non viaggia molto; l'Inglese assai, ma con criterî di osservazione e risultati di impressione ben diversi dai nostri; il Russo poi che si reca in Italia appartiene generalmente al ceto delle intelligenze più elevate, nè l'arte e la civiltà italiane potranno essere mai il comune patrimonio della popolazione russa, la cui psiche è lontana ed estranea alla civiltà europea.

Ma il popolo italiano pensò che i torti inglesi non eran poi stati tanto gravi in confronto dei torti tedeschi, se Giuseppe Mazzini (il primissimo degl'Italiani della nuova Italia) aveva finito con l'amare l'Inghilterra.

Il popolo italiano pensò che i torti francesi non eran poi stati tanto gravi in confronto dei torti tedeschi, se Giuseppe Garibaldi (il gloriosissimo Eroe della nuova Italia), Amilcare Cipriani (il più ribelle dei perseguitati politici della nuova Italia), Giovanni Bovio, Felice Cavallotti e Matteo Renato Imbriani (tre dei più intemerati uomini politici della nuova Italia), Giosuè Carducci e Gabriele d'Annunzio (i due più grandi poeti della nuova Italia) avevano finito col difendere ed esaltare la Francia.

Il popolo italiano, perciò, come non s'era fatto contaminare dall'oro dei Tedeschi, così non si fece sedurre neppure dalla loro tardiva prosa adulatrice.

I Teutoni, infine, ricorsero anche alle minacce. Ma invano: per la semplice ragione che il popolo italiano, quando è infiammato da una causa ch'esso crede giusta, non ha paura di nessuno, tanto meno della morte, come lo prova luminosissimamente il suo secolare martirologio.

X

Cupidige territoriali.

Dove furono le cupidige territoriali che spinsero il popolo italiano ad entrare nella grande guerra, attaccando l'Austria?

Senza dubbio l'Italia, risorta come grande Potenza soltanto mezzo secolo addietro, trovò le più importanti

posizioni mondiali saldamente occupate da quelle nazioni ch'erano grandi Potenze da secoli. Trovò una gerarchia internazionale precostituita e férrea, in cui a lei, tra le grandi Potenze, non restava che l'ultimo posto. Trovò un equilibrio rigido e soffocante ch'essa — più piccola, più povera, più debole delle altre — non poteva scrollare per tagliarsi nel mondo una meno angusta porzione di ricchezza e di dominio, e nemmeno per ricostituirsi a piena unità nazionale, geografica, etnica.

L'espansione territoriale era dunque per l'Italia una vitale incoercibile necessità.

Pur nondimeno il popolo italiano, rispettoso quanto mai dell'indipendenza nazionale degli altri popoli, anche di quelli che ingiustamente sono chiamati inferiori, anzi addirittura barbari, rifuggì sempre dalla politica e dalle imprese aventi carattere espansivo territoriale. Si oppose con le barricate alla guerra contro l'Abissinia per la conquista dell'Eritrea epilogata con la disfatta d'Adua il 1° marzo 1896 e alla guerra contro la Turchia del 1912 per la conquista della Tripolitania e della Cirenaica (le due uniche guerre della nuova Italia) volute dal governo monarchico dei Savoia per gl'interessi bancarî, industriali, commerciali e religiosi della plutocrazia italiana. Si oppose e non s'impose, come nella grande guerra odierna, perchè le due summenzionate guerre africane potevano nuocere fino a un certo punto alla compagine e ai destini della nazione, mentre la grande guerra odierna altererà certamente la compagine e i destini dell'intera Europa, dell'intero mondo.

Il popolo della nuova Italia, entrando nella grande guerra durante la primavera del 1915, non ebbe di mira vantaggi territoriali.

Se avesse avuto di mira vantaggi territoriali, esso si sarebbe schierato, fin dall'inizio della guerra stessa, a fianco dell'Austria e della Germania, o per lo meno sarebbe rimasto neutrale.

Nel primo caso, la Francia sarebbe stata fulmineamente schiacciata. Il disastro francese si sarebbe ineluttabilmente ripercosso sull'Inghilterra e sulla Russia. E l'Austria e la Germania, rimaste vittoriose e árbitre della situazione

europea, anzi mondiale, avrebbero ben volentieri ricompensata l'Italia con concessioni territoriali comprendenti non solo le terre irredente a est della penisola (dal Trentino fino alle coste meridionali dell'Albania), ma anche le terre irredente a ovest della penisola (come Savoia, Nizza e la Corsica), le isole di Malta, la Tunisia, Gibilterra e — *dulcis in fundo* — qualche "grossa colonia" al di là del Mediterraneo.

Nel secondo caso, l'Austria e la Germania avrebbero non meno volentieri — checchè si dica in contrario — ricompensata l'Italia con concessioni territoriali proporzionate alle probabilità di vittoria che dal mantenimento della neutralità italiana sarebbero derivate agl'imperi di Francesco Giuseppe e di Guglielmo II.

Ma ai facili ingrandimenti territoriali, il popolo della nuova Italia preferì — a costo di sacrifizi superiori di molto al valore delle terre irredente sintetizzate nel binomio Trento e Trieste e a qualsiasi altro compenso materiale — la causa dei deboli, la causa dell'umanità. Preferì distruggere i sogni egemonici della plutocrazia teutonica. Preferì scuotere dalle fondamenta la potenza militare teutonica. Preferì salvare le nazioni dalle insidie e dall'arroganza dell' imperialismo teutonico.

Se il colpo mortale che, per mezzo della grande guerra, riceverà la *Kultur* si risolverà in male per la vera civiltà umana, la colpa di ciò bisognerà darla per giustizia al popolo della nuova Italia. E, con la colpa, il rimorso e la vergogna in eterno.

Se, invece, il colpo mortale che, per mezzo della grande guerra, riceverà la *Kultur* si risolverà in bene per la vera civiltà umana, il merito di ciò bisognerà darlo per giustizia al popolo della nuova Italia. E, col merito, la riconoscenza universale e la gloria in eterno.

Il futuro Tacito giudicherà.

XI

Gli Onnipotenti.

La grande guerra odierna è l'epilogo logico e naturale dei mali che le caste privilegiate commisero durante il loro lungo imperio sul mondo. È il colmo del male che le dette caste potevano praticamente commettere ai danni del mondo.

I propugnatori dei diritti umani contrapposero, è vero, attraverso i secoli, i frutti della loro mente, vigorosi mirabili immortali; gl'impulsi della loro coscienza, gentili pietosi affettuosi; i martíri della loro carne, eroici magnanimi sublimi. Ma tanta effusione di bellezza non potè impedire che il vaso di Pandóra traboccasse e che i miasmi del suo putrido contenuto infettassero l'intero organismo sociale.

Significa che gli elementi — intellettuali morali materiali — usati dai propugnatori dei diritti umani, per quanto sgorgati dalle più pure fonti del pensiero e del sentimento, per quanto ardentemente protesi verso i più santi ideali della vita, non furono adattabili alla natura umana (nè alla parte opprimente, nè alla parte oppressa). Se fossero stati adattabili, l'umanità li avrebbe assimilati. E a quest'ora non ci sarebbero più oppressi ed oppressori. Gli uni e gli altri sarebbero già entrati, volenti o nolenti, nella fase tanto vagheggiata del vivere civile. In quella fase, nella quale i popoli, tutti i popoli indistintamente, non possono che trovare giustizia, libertà, prosperità, fratellanza, pace, felicità.

Dalle rovine della grande guerra, sáture del sangue e del pianto di tutta l'umana famiglia, si leverà un soffio di novissima energia intelligente.

Questo soffio creerà i novissimi uomini, i quali saranno onnipotenti e si chiameranno *Onnipotenti*.

Io ne faccio il preannunzio con la commozione che proviene dall'íntima certezza.

Gli Onnipotenti si sostituiranno a coloro (laici ed ecclesiastici) i quali non seppero fare altro che propugnare invano i diritti dell'umanità.

Gli Onnipotenti colpiranno coloro (laici ed ecclesiastici) i quali non seppero fare altro che opera ostinatamente nefasta.

Ma la loro azione — l'azione degli Onnipotenti — non avrà la brusca violenza distruttiva dei moti sismici.

Essa avrà la graduale virtù fecondatrice del Sole che appare ogni mattina sull'orizzonte. Azione d'amore. E, come tale, penetrerà, senza che nessuna influenza deletéria possa impedirlo, nell'infetto organismo sociale: e lo purificherà; lo guarirà; lo eleverà alle più alte cime della perfezione fisica, psicologica, spirituale, dove il sogno poetico del mio Campanella potrà alfine diventare realtà. Realtà sempre progrediente e trionfante nella quotidiana e perenne vita del genere umano.

O pietas, o prisca fides, o candida corda,
Lugentum ignorantumque atri abiere colores;
Exulet impietas, fraudes, mendacia, lites.
Nec timeant agnive lupum, aut armenta leonem;
Inque bonum populi discent regnare tyranni;
Ocia cessarunt et cessavere labores,
Nam labor est iocus, in multos partitus amice.

O pietà, o prisca fede, o candidi cuori,
Gli atri e funesti colori dell'ignoranza sono spariti;
Sono sparite l'empietà, la frode, la menzogna, le guerre.
Non più l'agnello temerà il lupo, nè gli armenti il leone;
I popoli insegneranno ai tiranni di ben governare;
L'ozio cesserà, cesseranno le lotte per l'esistenza,
E il lavoro non sarà che un gioco diviso tra buoni amici.

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Giudizi di giornali
e di persone
sul libro

Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America

di Luigi Carnovale
pubblicato a
Chicago, Illinois
Stati Uniti d'America

GIUDIZI DI GIORNALI E DI PERSONE

THE CHICAGO RECORD-HERALD (Edwin L. Shuman), Chicago, Illinois:

In un volume in lingua italiana intitolato *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America*, Luigi Carnovale offre ai suoi compatrioti una ventina di vividi e interessanti *essays* (saggi), ch'egli opportunamente ha scritto in varie occasioni sugl'Italiani residenti negli Stati Uniti d'America. Nel più importante di tali *essays* sono descritte, come il titolo stesso del libro indica, le tribolazioni di coloro che tentano di pubblicare giornali italiani in questo paese. L'autore narra molte delle sue personali esperienze su questo campo: esperienze divertenti e scoraggianti a un tempo. Egli ha una povera opinione della maggioranza degli emigrati italiani, e lo dice con candida franchezza. Ma ciò ch'egli rimprovera di più ai suoi connazionali, è il mal vezzo ch'essi hanno di spogliarsi della loro italianità per adottare, invece, uno spurio americanismo. Egli crede che gl'Italiani non dovrebbero votare qui, e tanto meno parlare d'imporre candidati italiani, dal momento che un qualsiasi politicante irlandese può vantarsi di poter comprare con un barile di birra tutti i voti italiani ch'egli vuole. Il rimedio per siffatti mali, secondo il signor Carnovale, è più istruzione e più italianità.

In uno degli ultimi *essays*, il signor Carnovale "paga i suoi rispetti", con un linguaggio ch'egli modestamente chiama "piuttosto vivace", al prete di Chicago che in un sermone ha attaccato malignamente Mazzini e Garibaldi. Il signor Carnovale ha anche una cattiva opinione delle leggi americane, per avere esse tollerato che un De Forest ed altri usurpassero l'invenzione del telegrafo senza fili di Marconi. Ma forse il colpo più forte per gli Americani si trova nel capitolo difendente Caruso dallo scandalo suscitato per l'incidente della *monkey-house* (casa delle scimmie). Che stupore se il giornale quotidiano di Chicago, il quale ha originalmente pubblicato il detto *essay*, avesse capito bene tutto il significato delle roventi metafore italiane che l'articolo stesso conteneva!

Il signor Carnovale scrive fluentemente, con forza e vivacità. La sua fantasia si mostra inesauribile come il suo vocabolario, ed egli ha un senso d'umore accoppiato a un equilibrio intellettuale. Basta soltanto leggere poche pagine del suo libro, per vedere ch'egli è un vivo esempio della vigile giovine generazione che sta al presente rigenerando l'Italia.

L'ITALIA, Chicago, Illinois:

Luigi Carnovale ha dato alla luce un libro intitolato *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America.*

È confortante constatare che la tormentosa vita americana a base di materialismo, e la corsa incessante appresso al "demone giallo"— come

direbbe Massimo Gorki — non hanno alterato l'idealismo più puro che è proprio una caratteristica dei figli della terra dove il *sì* suona.

Infatti sotto la copertina del libro che — non sappiamo se per caso fortuito o per pensiero premeditato — è di un pronunciato color verde, araldo di speranze e di illusioni, batte un cuore che gli anni passati in America non hanno travolto, non hanno deviato da un ordine di recondite aspirazioni.

Per quel maligno pessimismo, che è in fondo all'anima umana, parrebbe, dal titolo del libro, che il volume dovesse spezzare una lancia contro, anzichè a favore della tanto criticata stampa coloniale. Invece Luigi Carnovale non una, ma mille lance spezza per lumeggiare sotto i migliori aspetti questa forza, compendio d'italianità in America, che si estende ovunque esiste un nucleo d'Italiani e che trova — suoi eterni avversari — l'indolenza della massa poco evoluta e un cinico sorriso, diremo quasi di compatimento, sulle labbra di coloro che per un cumulo di circostanze stringono oggi con férrea mano un mucchio d'oro.

Senza reticenze, senza mezzi termini, l'autore, con uno stile spigliato che va diritto al cuore, loda quando la lode occorre per incoraggiare tra gli emigrati un'iniziativa; ma la sua parola scende come una scudisciata quando trattasi di denunziare qualcuno di quei criteri erronei che serpeggiano tra le nostre colonie.

Ma non è soltanto per lodare virtù o biasimare vizî che il libro è stato scritto.

Un'idea altamente patriottica aleggia in tutto il volume: il risorgimento morale dei nostri emigrati; i quali — provenienti in gran parte dai paeselli d'Italia sperduti sui monti boscosi o in fondo alle valli — hanno avuto finora il mal vezzo di subire spontaneamente una certa inferiorità quando si son trovati a contatto col popolo americano nelle popolose città dei *grattanuvole* e delle ferrovie aeree.

Se i nostri emigrati, che solo ricordano come un sogno Napoli o Genova, conoscessero meglio la loro patria — che al suo passato, unico nel mondo, accoppia un presente egualmente glorioso — avrebbero maggiore dignità di sè stessi e non guarderebbero dal basso in alto tutto ciò che non è italiano.

Questo concetto, che noi abbiamo esposto in poche parole, è l'anima del libro.

Luigi Carnovale — italiano in ogni sua íntima latebra, profondo conoscitore del pensiero di Dante e di Mazzini ch'egli cita con grande liberalità — ha per la patria un sacro culto, diremmo quasi un fanatismo.

Con occhio scrutatore, egli non si ferma alla superficie che fa sembrare grande l'America, ma affonda il ferro anatomico e, con un esame imparziale, mette nella loro vera luce fatti che ci fanno ricordare la famosa statua dai piedi d'argilla sognata da Nabucodonosor.

Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America non è un libro scritto da un autore compiacente per carezzare velleità e lusingare amor propri. Con giovanile entusiasmo, lo scrittore ha trasfuso nelle sue pagine un po' della sua anima impastata di idealismo e di poesia. Il suo libro è

il grido dell'esiliato che ha temprato lo spirito nel culto sacro del "fiero ghibellino" (Dante). Egli, al di sopra d'ogni altra concezione, vede la patria, la terra che ha dato i natali a martiri del pensiero come Campanella e Giordano Bruno, e divinatori delle forze naturali e di leggi fisiche come Galileo e Marconi, a grandi patrioti, a illustri scrittori; egli vede l'Italia nelle più rigogliose produzioni del genio. E quest'Italia egli decanta; e quest'Italia egli vorrebbe affermata sul suolo americano che da un Italiano fu scoperto.[1]

La Tribuna Italiana Transatlantica, Chicago, Illinois:

Appena ricevuto il libro *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America* di Luigi Carnovale, lo leggemmo tutto d'un fiato, tanto grande fu l'interesse ch'esso seppe ispirarci.

Già fin dalla lettura dei versi

Coscienza fusca
O della propria, o dell'altrui vergogna,
Pur sentirà la tua parola brusca,

con i quali Dante profetizza l'ufficio della stampa e che il Carnovale mise felicemente in cima al suo lavoro, noi, nella qualità di giornalisti, cominciammo a provare un divino senso di gratitudine per l'autore e l'opera sua. E allorquando c'inoltrammo nella lettura della prefazione, in cui la stampa coloniale è valorosamente difesa, tale senso assunse proporzioni gigantesche, finchè a un certo punto, nel forte dell'entusiasmo, dedicammo mentalmente al nostro Carnovale un monumento di gratitudine.

Siamo sicuri che i colleghi italo-americani non saranno meno di noi, ma più di noi, nel dichiararsi grati all'autore di questo libro per la rivendicazione ch'egli fa del nostro ufficio, del quale egli merita il titolo di *cavaliere*.

Le lance che il Carnovale spezza per noi vanno benedette.

Alla prefazione segue una serie di splendidi articoli, dall'autore pubblicati in diversi giornali degli Stati Uniti, che si rileggono sempre con diletto e interessamento sommi, per la continua splendidezza della forma e il denso scintillío delle idee eccellenti.

La Patria (Silvio Picchianti editore), Chicago, Illinois:

Quante verità Luigi Carnovale dice nel suo libro *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America*! E come le dice!

Il brio, la purezza dello stile, la sincerità dell'esposizione dei fatti, il quadro dell'ambiente, i tipi coloniali — da quel *donnône* sputante fiele contro il direttore del giornale che ha il coraggio d'insistere nell'invio di questo, a quel presidente di società che legge il giornale capovolto — tutto, tutto rende il libro simpatico e interessante.

[1] Questo articolo fu pubblicato anche dai giornali *La Tribuna Italiana Transatlantica* di Chicago, Illinois e *La Montagna* di Newark, New Jersey.

E nessuno meglio di noi giornalisti, viventi in quell'ambiente stesso del quale il Carnovale rileva le deficienze, i difetti, le apatie vergognose, può giudicare vera e onesta l'opera di questo giovane intelligente, al quale non sono restate ignote le sorti riserbate a chi con la penna prende a dipingere la vita dei propri connazionali emigrati, celandone fraternamente i difetti, esaltandone le virtù, difendendoli dagli attacchi bassi e maligni dei giornalisti americani, i quali di noi non conoscono altro che le gesta della Mano Nera, e ignorano completamente, falsandola sempre se la sanno, la storia nostra, maestra di civiltà e di grandezza in tutte le parti del mondo, compresa questa che ad essi diede il genio eletto d'un figlio d'Italia.

Il Carnovale, nel suo libro, ha raccolto varî di quegli articoli con i quali, dalle colonne dei periodici da lui diretti negli Stati Uniti, lanciava il grido di difesa per i suoi fratelli emigrati; e questi articoli, oltre a rivelare la poderosità del suo ingegno, dimostrano la grandezza dell'animo suo d'italiano vero, a cui premono, più d'ogni altra cosa, gl'interessi dei suoi poveri connazionali, ai quali si riserba — oltre lo sfruttamento — l'insulto basso e la calunnia infame.

L'articolo *Gli untori della febbre gialla*, per esempio, è un capolavoro. Le parole di fuoco, che con somma dialettica il Carnovale lancia in faccia agli accusatori maligni dell'onesto e sobrio operaio italiano, sono veri strali di rampogna.

Ma, ripetiamo, tutto il libro è bello ed interessante; e se c'è una cosa che addolori in esso, è la parola *fine*, la quale ci toglie alla deliziosa lettura delle pagine bellissime che la penna valorosa di Luigi Carnovale ha vergato così dottamente.

All'amico carissimo i nostri sinceri rallegramenti per l'opera sua d'alto patriottismo, compiuta con la pubblicazione di questo libro che ogni Italiano di cuore e d'intelligenza dovrebbe leggere — come noi — dalla prima all'ultima pagina.[1]

Il Secolo, Chicago, Illinois:

Il bellissimo libro *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America* di Luigi Carnovale dovrebbe essere letto da tutti, perchè ognuno vi avrebbe da apprendere qualche cosa, specie noi esuli volontari che viviamo lontano dalle produzioni librarie, in una terra dove altra sodisfazione non si prova che quella della conquista del *Dio Giallo*.

Il libro è diviso in una prefazione e ventidue capitoli.

Nella prefazione l'autore, giovane pieno di fede e animato dai più santi ideali, spiega le ragioni che l'hanno indotto a riunire in un volume gli articoli da lui pubblicati in diversi giornali degli Stati Uniti.

Con *verve*, anzi con molta *verve*, egli — l'autore — dimostra a luce chiara e senza fronzoli l'inferiorità intellettaule dei nostri emigrati e la loro apatía per tutto ciò che sa d'italianità, ed afferma che se le nostre

[1] Questo articolo fu pubblicato anche dal giornale *Il Vessillo* di Baltimore, Maryland.

colonie sono tenute in non cale, disprezzate, vilipese, la colpa è dell'analfabetismo. Dunque: istruzione in Italia, italiani sempre in America.

Quando il nostro contadino avrà imparato a conoscere la terra che gli ha dato i natali: quando avrà saputo che l'Italia è stata maestra di civiltà a tutto il mondo, egli, siamone certi, non si vergognerà più di dire che è italiano.

Nei capitoli che seguono la prefazione, l'autore, con non comune acume, affonda il bisturì nelle diverse questioni coloniali e, con mano sicura, incide denudando al pubblico la miseria morale in cui noi emigrati viviamo.

Ma, nello stesso tempo, egli, con l'anima esuberante di sentimentalismo quasi mistico, ci fa rivivere nella mente le pagine più belle della nostra storia; e, come in una proiezione cinematografica, ci fa assistere a delle scene che ci rapiscono l'animo, trasportandolo in alto, in alto, dove tutto è luce, vita, forza!

Noi in quelle pagine tuffiamo lo spirito esausto dalle lotte che qui combattiamo ogni ora, per ritemprarci a sostenere ancóra, con maggiore energia, nuove lotte e nuove conquiste nel campo della natura e dell'arte: di quell'arte che vi rapisce e sublima con l'incanto della sua bellezza, perchè la bellezza è il suo naturale fondamento. E chi è amante del bello, chi è conquiso dalla bellezza come Luigi Carnovale, non può restarne estraneo, ma vi è attratto come da forza magnetica.

Nel libro del Carnovale, l' eco delle coscienze umane, i fatti coloniali più importanti sono descritti in modo affascinante e suggestivo, sì da fonderli in una mirabile sintesi armonica.

Questa lettura che vi estasia, quella forma che vi ammalia, quella bellezza occulta che si ripercuote al di dentro della nostra anima, vi trasportano lontano dalle passioni malvage degli uomini e, per un momento, vi fanno dimenticare l'ambiente in cui siete costretto a vivere.

Non un esame critico è stato nostro intento di fare in questa breve recensione, ma un sereno cenno di quanto nel libro *Il Giornalismo* si contiene, per raffermare la speranza che l'amico Carnovale possa altro dare all'arte, per mantenere, anche in queste contrade, alto ed intemerato il nome italiano.[1]

Il Bollettino Delle Società Italiane, Chicago, Illinois:

Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America di Luigi Carnovale contiene una serie di poderosi articoli, i quali a ragione dimostrano, con una critica sagace e veritiera, quanto grande sia l'ignoranza delle nostre colonie; mentre, d'altra parte, la lunga prefazione che precede tali articoli, compendia tutto un programma d'italianità. Benchè su certi punti non condividiamo le idee dell'autore, pure non possiamo fare a meno di congratularci vivissimamente con lui e raccomandare la lettura del suo libro.

[1] Questo articolo fu pubblicato anche da *La Tribuna Italiana Transatlantica* di Chicago, Illinois.

La Sentinella, Hoboken, New Jersey:

Luigi Carnovale, col suo bel libro *Il Giornalsimo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America*, ha colmato una lacuna nel mondo letterario italo-americano, difendendo con una prosa smagliante la non sempre gradita figura del giornalista coloniale, e parlando delle masse immigrate con una vivacità di stile che affascina il lettore e gli fa scorrere le numerose pagine tutte d'un fiato, tale è la splendidezza della forma e l'eccellenza delle idee, sia che parli del dolore di nostra gente, sia che ne descriva le virtù misconosciute o poco apprezzate.

Luigi Carnovale, conosciutissimo per altri pregevoli lavori, ha diritto all'ammirazione e alla riconoscenza nostra.

La Patria, Spokane, Washington:

Nel libro *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America* sono raccolti diversi articoli del valoroso giornalista Luigi Carnovale.

Ci siamo compiaciuti nel rilevare l'utilità pratica di detti articoli, scritti da una penna maestra che ai bollori della gioventù accoppia l'assennatezza della persona erudita.

Il detto libro, per quanto ci detta il nostro giudizio, interessa tutti gli Italiani emigrati, i quali farebbero cosa utile ad acquistarlo e far tesoro di quanto in esso è splendidamente scritto.

La Gazzetta Del Massachusetts, Boston, Massachusetts:

Il geniale scrittore Luigi Carnovale ha pubblicato un bellissimo volume di oltre 200 pagine intitolato *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America*.

Il libro contiene una ventina d'articoli che fanno veramente onore al giovine scrittore, sia per la forma letteraria che per le savie, giuste e istruttive idee ivi espresse.

Il Corriere di Cincinnati, Cincinnati, Ohio.

È uscito *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America* di Luigi Carnovale.

L'autore si rivela, dalla prima all'ultima pagina del libro, sopratutto italiano di mente e di cuore.

Egli, con profonda conoscenza d'uomini e di cose, tratta magistralmente di importanti questioni coloniali e di vita italiana.

È un libro interessantissimo, che dovrebbe essere letto da tutti.

L'Aurora, Houston, Texas:

Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America di Luigi Carnovale è un bel volume, è un'opera interessante, specie in questi

tempi, nei quali la gloria è il facile appannaggio delle nullità boriose, dell'improntitudine grottesca, dell'audacia insolente; in questi tempi, nei quali una folla d'oziosi e incolti gioca a colpo sicuro sulla tolleranza e sull'amoralità del pubblico; in questi tempi, nei quali la speculazione commerciale s'è insinuata perfino nella sacra aula del pensiero.

Il libro del Carnovale è una vera e propria necessità per tutti.

Noi ci auguriamo che lo sforzo di questo letterato porti un salutare risveglio nelle colonie italiane degli Stati Uniti.

La Luce, Utica, New York:

Il geniale scrittore Luigi Carnovale ha pubblicato a Chicago uno splendido libro intitolato *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America.*

Il detto libro è scritto con semplicità e con vera forma letteraria e, mentre pone a nudo il marcio che contengono le nostre colonie, manifesta, con pensieri improntati alla più scrupolosa verità, il concetto erroneo e stupido che i coloni hanno della stampa italo-americana. Cerca inoltre d'infondere negli emigrati italiani idee altamente patriottiche per ottenere il risorgimento morale delle nostre colonie.

Il Carnovale, già valoroso direttore del *Pensiero* e di altri giornali, gradisca i nostri rallegramenti per il bellissimo libro dato alla luce, di cui ogni famiglia italiana dovrebbe essere provvista.

Il Libero Pensiero, Ensley and Birmingham, Alabama.

Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America è il titolo d'uno splendido libro pubblicato a Chicago dal valoroso e simpatico giornalista Luigi Carnovale.

In questo libro sono raccolti pregevolissimi articoli che il chiaro scrittore ebbe già a pubblicare in alcuni giornali degli Stati Uniti.

Li precede una prefazione, nella quale molto assennatamente è descritto l'ambiente coloniale e sono messe a nudo delle dure verità.

È questo un libro che tutti gl'Italiani dovrebbero leggere per trarne grande ammaestramento.

La Stella Coloniale, Pen Argyl, Pennsylvania:

Un buon libro è certamente *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America* di Luigi Carnovale. Esso compendia un po' di tutto ciò che riguarda l'emigrato italiano ed è benone scritto.

L'autore merita l'encomio di tutta la stampa italiana non solo, ma di tutti gl'Italiani che comprendono.

Il Risveglio Coloniale, Syracusa, New York:

È stato recentemente pubblicato a Chicago un interessante libro: *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America.*

L'autore signor Luigi Carnovale dimostra d'essere uno scrittore di vaglia.

Egli svolge i suoi argomenti con molta facilità e franchezza, dando il colpo proprio dove spetta, mentre dall'altro lato loda schiettamente chi dev'essere lodato.

Egli svolge i suoi pensieri con amor patrio, limpidamente; e con occhio scrutinatore non si ferma alla superficie delle cose, ma va direttamente al fondo, mettendo a luce tutti i difetti e, nello stesso tempo, tutti i meriti dei nostri emigrati.

Sebbene non possiamo essere interamente d'accordo col Carnovale in varî punti, pure dobbiamo affermare che il suo libro è utilissimo.

Il Messaggero Italiano, San Antonio, Texas:

Il bel volume intitolato *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America* è un lavoro squisito del nostro intelligente connazionale signor Luigi Carnovale, il quale ha saputo trattare con fine tatto questioni coloniali molto interessanti a noi tutti.

La bellezza di questo libro consiste principalmente nelle diverse verità che in esso ben vengono lumeggiate e di cui si dovrebbe far tesoro da noi emigrati.

Al brillante scrittore signor Carnovale mandiamo le nostre sincere congratulazioni.

I Nostri Tempi, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania:

Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America di Luigi Carnovale è scritto con brio e con elegante correttezza; tocca al vivo tutte le piaghe coloniali, tutte le miserie morali, tutti i meschini odî e le eterne, riprovevoli diatribe di questa terra del *Dio Giallo*.

Luigi Carnovale si rivela, attraverso i periodi limpidi, armonici e diremmo quasi scultori dei suoi scritti, un giornalista colto e valoroso, libero pensatore, di animo buono e gentile e, sopratutto, italiano di mente e di cuore. Dalla prima all'ultima pagina del suo bel volume vibra, e fortemente, la corda dell'italianità, quale sentimento spontaneo e nobile, non finto e calcolatore.

Tali i pregi del libro, che merita di essere letto da quanti s'interessano del vasto e complesso problema coloniale.

Il Progresso Italo-Americano, New York City:

Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America è il titolo d'un libro che in questi giorni ha visto la luce a Chicago. Ne è autore l'egregio giovane signor Luigi Carnovale, un ingegno laborioso, un carattere leale, simpatico, vibrante, il quale, collaborando in diversi giornali degli Stati Uniti, diede sempre bellissimo saggio di svariata disposizione

e di rapidissimo tocco. Nel detto libro, che è stato accolto dal pubblico con favore, vibra assai la nota patriottica.

Al giovine autore il nostro plauso.

PERCHÈ?, Schenectady, New York:

Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America è il titolo d'un bellissimo volume d'oltre 200 pagine pubblicato da Luigi Carnovale a Chicago.

Con esso l'autore ci ha fatto gustare ore di sana lettura, dalla quale abbiamo raccolto pregevoli giudízi intorno ai periodici italo-americani, e pensieri originali sul calvario che sale colui il quale onestamente stampa o fa stampare un foglio per il decoro della nostra patria e della nostra lingua.

Il Carnovale, con parola facile e corretta, ha scritto pagine vere, perchè sentite, e pagine istruttive e morali, perchè mirano al bene dell'emigrato.

Il Giornalismo è un libro elegante nell'apparenza, come utile nella sostanza.

IL SECOLO XX, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania:

Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America di Luigi Carnovale è pieno di sagge considerazioni su soggetti importantissimi. La sola prefazione vale un Perù. L'autore si rivela in essa profondo conoscitore dell'elemento che abbonda cospicuo nelle nostre colonie d'America.

Insomma il libro del Carnovale è utilissimo sotto tutti i rapporti, è bene scritto e si lascia leggere d'un sol fiato.

LA DOMENICA, Rochester, New York:

Il libro intitolato *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America* di Luigi Carnovale rivela una buona conoscenza della lingua italiana; rivela anche nell'autore un animo ardente, pieno di buona volontà, sdegnoso di tutto ciò che è o che egli crede *wrong* (ingiusto).

È un libro che si fa leggere con piacere, perchè sincero, coraggioso, bene scritto: il che è già grande lode.

L'UNIONE, Pueblo, Colorado:

Il valoroso collega signor Luigi Carnovale ha testè pubblicato a Chicago uno splendido suo nuovo libro intitolato *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America.*

È un elegantissimo volume scritto con forma smagliante e briosa, che dovrebbe essere letto e studiato da tutte le persone intelligenti e colte. Un volume che è un vero tesoro, acchiudendo osservazioni profonde e uno studio accuratissimo della vita italiana in queste terre dell'affarismo.

Al brillante scrittore, che ha compiuto opera eminentemente e italianamente patriottica, vadano il nostro plauso e le nostre congratulazioni.

Vita Nuova, Rocksprings, Wyoming:

Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America dell'illustre scrittore signor Luigi Carnovale contiene bellissime e sante idee.

Corriere Di Trinidad, Trinidad, Colorado:

Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America di Luigi Carnovale è un libro che meriterebbe d'essere accolto in ogni casa di connazionale.

Attraverso la semplicità dello stile e la purgatezza della lingua, emana dal libro del Carnovale quel senso d'italianità che dovrebbe assistere ogni connazionale emigrato e formarne il suo nobile orgoglio.

Luigi Carnovale, nel suo *Giornalismo*, si mostra all'altezza del soggetto. Egli tratta e svolge maestrevolmente certe dure verità sull'emigrazione italiana negli Stati Uniti.

È insomma un bel libro questo del Carnovale: ed il *Corriere* ne consiglia la lettura a quanti sentono ancóra d'essere italiani in questa terra di volontario esilio.

Mastro Paolo, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania:

Abbiamo molto ammirato *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America* che Luigi Carnovale ha testè pubblicato a Chicago.

È impossibile ricordare tutti i pregi che esso ha: pregi che meglio si rilevano dalla lettura del libro stesso, anzichè da poche parole di recensione, la quale tante volte è sospetta di favoritismo.

Il libro del Carnovale è una raccolta di belli articoli storico-dottrinali che trattano di cose coloniali.

Il Carnovale espone con chiarezza, verità e convinzione pratica quello che sente, pensa e vuole l'Italiano che vive nelle colonie americane.

Il Carnovale prova brillantemente l'apatia degli emigrati per tutto ciò che riguarda ammirazione di ideali, sentimenti patriottici, educazione civile.

Conserveremo nel nostro archivio la dotta pubblicazione.

La Rivista, Newark, New Jersey:

Luigi Carnovale nel suo elegante volume *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America* ha voluto riunire una serie di suoi articoli seri e magistrali toccanti da vicino tutti i problemi concernenti gli emigrati italiani negli Stati Uniti.

Gli articoli sono scritti con uno stile veramente smagliante; essi sono del massimo interesse per gli studiosi della vera ed elegante lingua di Dante; epperò noi raccomandiamo l'acquisto immediato del libro.

L'Eco Del Rhode Island, Providence, Rhode Island:

Un utilissimo libro, elegante nella forma, è *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America* dell'esimio e conosciutissimo pubblicista signor Luigi Carnovale.

Lavoro di pazienza e di accuratezza, lavoro prezioso che si legge con entusiasmo e piacere. In esso l'autore ha avuto la nobile idea di difendere i diritti della patria natia e quelli di tanti operai italiani sparsi negli Stati Uniti.

L'importante volume è necessario agli emigrati, e ognuno dovrebbe acquistarlo.

Noi auguriamo di cuore una lunga vita all'autore, affinchè egli possa continuare a scrivere altri libri simili per gl'interessi della patria lontana e dei connazionali residenti nell'Unione Americana.

L'Italiano, Cleveland, Ohio:

Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America di Luigi Carnovale è un libro elegante scritto con garbo, con cuore, con sentimento d'italianità. Errori, pregiudizi e questioni della vita coloniale sono trattati magistralmente.

Gl'Italiani, invece di comprare e leggere i *Reali di Francia* e tanti altri libri inutili, farebbero bene a comprare e leggere il libro del Carnovale.

Roma, Denver, Colorado:

Il bellissimo libro *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America* di Luigi Carnovale è, possiamo ben dirlo, una perla di acute osservazioni e di elevate discussioni; è un libro che può senza dubbio entrare nel catalogo dei migliori libri scritti fino ad oggi sull'anima dei nostri emigrati.

Un bravo di cuore al collega Carnovale e l'augurio che il pubblico faccia buon viso al suo lavoro, il quale merita per davvero il plauso dei lettori di buon senso.

L'Opinione, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania:

Il chiaro collega Luigi Carnovale ha pubblicato a Chicago un libro intitolato *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America.* In esso sono raccolti diversi pregevoli articoli, preceduti da una prefazione, ove, con prosa vivida e a volte mordace, l'autore fa un quadro dell'ambiente coloniale, mettendo a nudo delle dure verità.

Pur non andando d'accordo col Carnovale su moltissime sue idee e conclusioni, conveniamo con lui che il giornalismo coloniale italiano negli Stati Uniti, con tutti i visibili difetti di un organismo ai primordi della sua vita, è degno, in complesso, di un maggiore appoggio e rispetto per i servizi che ha reso e che rende alle Colonie e alla Madre Patria.

Il Sole, Bridgeport, Connecticut:

Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America di Luigi Carnovale è un buon libro.

Con esso l'autore ha fatto opera salutare per i connazionali emigrati. Mettendo in rilievo il marcio esistente nelle colonie italiane d'America, egli ha reso chiaro il senso del suo pensiero; ma, nello stesso tempo, s'è mantenuto scrupolosamente lontano dalla benchè minima imparzialità.

Il Carnovale nei suoi articoli, che possono ben definirsi critico-letterari, tratta la questione dal punto di vista generale. Egli dimostra che nelle colonie italiane d'America esiste un elemento ignorante, superstizioso, cattivo. Ma alla redenzione morale di tale elemento tendono i suoi articoli.

Riuscirà egli nel suo intento? Mostriamoci ottimisti: speriamolo.

Chi è in grado di potere e sapere assaporare quanto il libro del Carnovale contiene, non si pentirà certo d'averlo letto.

Congratulazioni sincere all'autore per la sua interessante pubblicazione.

L'Eco Di Tampa, Tampa, Florida:

Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America è uno di quei libri che possono, senz'altro, chiamarsi buoni; e chi l'ha scritto è preceduto da buona fama di pubblicista e novelliere.

Luigi Carnovale ha fatto, come tutti noi, le sue dolorose esperienze di giornalista coloniale; e nel suo volume egli condensa, con frase smagliante e sincera, i suoi ricordi e le sue impressioni personali, dalle quali non si può dissentire, per le grandi verità che racchiudono e che riflettono.

Chi ha vissuto la vita delle nostre colonie, e l'ha vissuta da pubblicista cosciente del suo mandato, non può che aderire incondizionatamente alle critiche severe ma giuste che il Carnovale muove a individui e a cricche rappresentanti i veri e più mortali nemici dell'elevamento morale delle nostre colonie.

Si può magari dissentire dal pensiero politico del nostro autore, che traluce nitido, sereno, ben definito dalle pagine del *Giornalismo;* ma non si può negare al prezioso volume due doti pregevolissime: la chiarezza e l'eleganza dello stile, e la coordinatezza del pensiero genialissimo.

Chi non ha letto ancóra il *Giornalismo*, lo legga, e non mancherà di formarsi dell'autore e dei suoi scritti l'opinione che noi ci siamo formata.

La Capitale, Albany, New York:

Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America è il titolo d'un libro pubblicato ultimamente a Chicago da Luigi Carnovale, il quale, oltre ad essere uno scrittore insigne e un appassionato cultore della lingua di Dante, è anche un acuto osservatore delle condizioni economiche e sociali degli emigrati italiani nel Nord America.

L'Italo-Americano, New Orleans, Louisiana:

Un libro che dovrebbe correre per le mani di quanti Italiani, in Italia e negli Stati Uniti, s'interessano della scottante questione della nostra emigrazione, è *il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America* di Luigi Carnovale.

Verità dolorose che attristano, che qualche volta spezzano i più spontanei entusiasmi, echeggianti dell'íntimo affetto per la patria; quadri pervasi di amaro pessimismo, in cui passano a volta a volta, nella loro luce propria, il prominente coloniale e il nostro lavoratore analfabeta (spesso è analfabeta il prominente, ci sia permesso di bisbigliarvelo all'orecchio, o lettori); il regionalismo che divide e inasprisce; l'anti-italianità che disonora; tutte le piccole e grandi miserie coloniali sono l'oggetto di questo nitido volume.

All'autore — che con sincerità di intenti e con parola franca mette a nudo tante piccole anime gonfie della loro ridicola megalomania, e che pur solleva lo spirito, quando, quasi per felice contrasto, ricorda belle glorie e fulgide storie dell'Italia nostra—auguriamo successo pari alla sua franca audacia.

Il Risveglio, Denver, Colorado:

Luigi Carnovale, dotato di ingegno non comune, ha pubblicato a Chicago *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America:* raccolta d'articoli brillanti scritti con *verve* di erudito pubblicista.

Il Vesuvio, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania:

Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America di Luigi Carnovale si fa leggere per bontà di stile e interessa per varietà di soggetti e genialità di osservazioni.

Qualcuno potrà differire con l'autore dal modo di vedere certe cose; ma siamo certi che tutti potrebbero trovare nel volume del Carnovale la sodisfazione che si prova al cospetto d'una espressione di vita e sincerità di convinzione.

Raccomandiamo il libro ai nostri lettori e alle nostre lettrici.

L'Osservatore, Kansas City, Missouri:

Abbiamo letto attentamente il volume *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America.*

Il nostro encomio a Luigi Carnovale e l'augurio che il suo lavoro valga ad illuminare le menti offuscate dei nostri lavoratori.

Il Corriere Del Sud, New Orleans, Louisiana:

È stato pubblicato dal valente pubblicista Luigi Carnovale uno splendido libro intitolato *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America.*

In questo libro sono raccolti pregevolissimi articoli che il chiaro scrittore ebbe già a pubblicare in diversi giornali degli Stati Uniti. Li precede una prefazione, nella quale molto assennatamente l'autore descrive l'ambiente coloniale, mettendo a nudo delle dure verità.

L'Operaio Italiano, Windber, Pennsylvania:

Il nuovo lavoro di Luigi Carnovale intitolato *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America* è un bellissimo ed elegante volume di oltre 200 pagine, interessantissimo per chi ama una buona e sana lettura. In esso l'autore descrive con sentimenti nobili, scevri da qualsiasi partigianeria, ciò che si è fatto, ciò che si fa e ciò che si dovrà fare per tenere alto il prestigio del nome italiano negli Stati Uniti d'America.

L'alta missione della stampa italiana, che l'autore difende con spirito degno d'ogni riguardo, è quivi riprodotta con parole sincere ed entusiaste.

Per la difesa nobile che il Carnovale fa degl'Italiani e dell'Italia nel suo volume, merita che questo sia da tutti letto, studiato, considerato e bene apprezzato.

Noi ne raccomandiamo l'interessante lettura.

L'Ora, Newark, New Jersey:

Il giovine scrittore Luigi Carnovale ha dato alla luce un libro di oltre 200 pagine intitolato *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America*, che noi abbiamo letto d'un fiato e con viva attenzione.

Questo bel volume riempie il vuoto che da anni esiste tra gli emigrati italiani nel Nord America. Esso è un caustico roventissimo che scende sulla grande e cancrenosa piaga del nostro giornalismo, sovente mal retto, spesso non compreso, sempre e dovunque disprezzato.

Il Carnovale, soldato intelligente e coraggioso della vera missione della stampa, ha pubblicato in diversi giornali degli Stati Uniti quanto ora è raccolto nel detto volume e che è tutto un lavoro d'un pioniere valente ed ardito, il quale s'apre il varco in un campo ostruito e, conquistato il passo, grida coraggioso allo sboscamento e alla edificazione.

Se ci fosse lecito, proporremmo che il volume del Carnovale fosse pubblicato in appendice in tutti i giornali italiani dell'Unione Americana, come grave ammonimento alle rispettive colonie di ben conoscere e apprezzare la stampa italiana, ed ai giornalisti il dovere grandissimo di un lavoro sano, illibato e fecondo di sapere e di progresso.

A ogni modo confidiamo che questo libro integro e veritiero, col quale l'autore, in bella forma italiana e con virile carattere, ha fustigato i gravi difetti che inquinano le colonie italiane del Nord America, sia ovunque letto e compreso.

Il Risorgimento, Chicago, Illinois:

Abbiamo letto tutto d'un fiato *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani*

nel Nord America di Luigi Carnovale, e vi abbiamo trovato delle sante verità.

Speriamo che tutti i connazionali leggeranno, come noi, il bel libro.

La Parola dei Socialisti, Chicago, Illinois:

Il collega Luigi Carnovale, un colto e simpatico giovane, ha pubblicato un riuscitissimo studio di impressioni sul *Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America.*

Il libro è stato lodato da scrittori e da giornali negli Stati Uniti e in Italia, e il coro unanime di elogi è stato meritato.

Il libro, che si legge anche volentieri perchè scritto in un italiano poco in uso fra gli anglosassonizzati (ci sia perdonato l'orribile vocobolo) delle nostre colonie, ha un merito principale, indiscusso: è vero.

Da queste colonne ci capita raramente di occuparci di recensioni.

È che i nostri lettori, nell'assillo quotidiano di conquiste improrogabili, avrebbero poco tempo per seguirci nei nostri ragionamenti bibliografici. Ma facciamo volentieri un'eccezione. Leggano i nostri compagni questo libro; vi apprenderanno qualcosa.

Noi, internazionalisti convinti e militanti, ci congratuliamo col Carnovale che, istruendo e invitando all'istruzione, ha saputo e voluto combattere il patriottismo più cretino e più stupido di tutti i patriottismi: il patriottismo per la patria degli altri.

E con l'elogio, davvero sentito, all'autore, un augurio: che i nostri immigrati, se non sanno diventare internazionalisti, una volta cacciati a pedate dal loro paese, facciano ammeno, se è possibile, di ardere di sacro fuoco patriottico per un altro paese che li accoglie solo come animali da tiro e da riproduzione.

The Christian Register, Boston, Massachusetts:

È venuto nelle nostre mani un interessante libro che è come un esponente del *Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America.* Esso contiene una collezione d'articoli scritti da Luigi Carnovale.

La stampa italiana del nostro paese ha conquistato un'importante posizone, se essa è capace d'avere nel suo seno scrittori che possiedono, come il giovane Carnovale, tanta calda immaginazione, tanti generosi propositi, tanta abilità letteraria; qualità, queste, messe in evidenza anche nell'incantevole idillio *Il Sogno di Francesco* dello stesso Carnovale.

La Tribuna Canadiana, Toronto, Ontario (Canadà):

Il brillante collega Luigi Carnovale ha pubblicato giorni or sono a Chicago un interessante lavoro dal titolo *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America.*

È un'opera importante, dove l'autore ha sapientemente raccolto un buon numero di articoli ch'egli ha pubblicato in diversi giornali degli

Stati Uniti e che si rileggono sempre con piacere, perchè, oltre all'essere scritti in buon italiano, sono eminentemente patriottici.

Noi crediamo che l'importante libro del Carnovale dovrebbe trovarsi nelle mani di tutti.

La Rivista Popolare di Politica, Lettere e Scienze sociali diretta dal prof. Napoleone Colaianni, deputato al Parlamento nazionale, Roma-Napoli, Italia:

Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America di Luigi Carnovale è buono, in quanto vi si esprimono sentimenti improntati alla italianità.

Ars et Labor, la rivista edita dalla Casa Ricordi di Milano, Italia:

Il bel volume *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America* di Luigi Carnovale contiene articoli che interessano non solo gl'Italiani sparsi nel Nord America, ma tutti gl'Italiani, perchè in tali articoli sono trattate, in forma brillante, questioni riguardanti esclusivamente il prestigio e il benessere italiano.

Il Pungolo, Napoli, Italia:

Un libro veramente buono e di elevati sentimenti patriottici e sociali è quello che ha dato alle stampe, a Chicago, l'egregio pubblicista Luigi Carnovale sul *Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America.*

Luigi Carnovale di Stilo, uno dei più forti e brillanti ingegni della giovine Calabria, ha per lunghi anni esercitato con decoro e nobiltà la professione di pubblicista nelle terre d' America, ed ha così raccolto, in questo prezioso e nitido volume, parecchi suoi articoli, frutto di acuta osservazione e di studio sagace.

Le questioni più varie e più palpitanti sono trattate dal Carnovale in questo suo libro, che è la più fulgida gemma della sue opere. Vi è descritto con tinte vivaci e con dolorose considerazioni il giornalismo degli emigrati italiani nel Nord America, alto, nobile, patriottico, umanitario sempre, ma con i suoi difetti e le sue deficienze, non tenuto in conto e non incoraggiato dagli stessi connazionali *americanizzati* e neppure dai rappresentanti del patrio governo. Vi è descritto lo stato reietto in cui versano gli emigrati italiani che, per difetto di educazione, di patriottismo e di coesione, restano in una continua inferiorità di fronte alla boriosa ignoranza, gonfia d'oro, degli stranieri.

Il Carnovale ne ricerca le cause più recondite, addita i rimedî, sprona la *Dante Alighieri*, propone e insiste sull'insegnamento patriottico e sull'istruzione obbligatoria nelle scuole d'Italia non astrattamente com' è adesso, ma nella pratica della vita.

Di molte altre cose, anche letterarie, tratta profondamente il Carnovale nel suo ottimo libro. Ma lo spazio, da una parte, che manca, e il

desiderio che ogni *vero* Italiano acquisti e legga attentamente con amore il libro in parola, fan sì che noi non ci dilunghiamo come vorremmo e come il libro merita. Libro che è la più alta manifestazione d'italianità impersonata in Luigi Carnovale, mente elevata, animo nobilissimo, fibra calabra.

Basti ricordare che i più eminenti uomini si sono vivamente congratulati col distinto autore per il suo lavoro di pregi inestimabili che dovrebbe andare nelle mani di tutti.

Noi, da queste colonne, non possiamo che inviare a Luigi Carnovale i più fervidi augúri di una luminosa carriera.

Accattatis Prof. Luigi, letterato calabrese, mandò, in ricambio del *Giornalismo*, un suo opuscolo al Carnovale con queste autografe parole:

> "A Luigi Carnovale, che onora la Calabria, ammirando, con animo grato, dona l'Autore."

Ardigò Prof. Roberto, educatore, filosofo:

Egregio Sig. Carnovale: Ho ricevuto il di Lei libro *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America*, e ne ho già letto le 43 pagine della prefazione con vivissimo interessamento. Leggerò anche il resto. E intanto La ringrazio di essersi compiaciuto di mandarmi il bel regalo.

Al lontano degno fratello italiano, godo di significare l'affettuoso mio saluto.

Da Padova.

Devotissimo
Prof. Roberto Ardigò.

Baccelli Alfredo, romanziere, poeta, deputato al Parlamento nazionale italiano, ex ministro del Regno:

Egregio Sig. Carnovale: Ho ricevuto il suo volume e La ringrazio. Ella ha un bell'ingegno e una brillante cultura. In cordiale ricambio Le mando il mio ultimo romanzo.

Una stretta di mano dal

suo

Da Roma.

Alfredo Baccelli.

Boselli Paolo, decano del Parlamento nazionale italiano, ex-ministro, presidente onorario della *Dante Alighieri*, presidente del Consiglio dei ministri:

Egregio Sig. Carnovale: Le sono gratissimo per la cortesia con la quale m'inviò l'interessante suo volume.

Il pensiero degl'Italiani è stretto in una sola idealità dovunque vivano: nè i mari separano gli animi nostri.

Giova affermare l'operosità intellettuale degl'Italiani che sono in paesi lontani.

Ed è bello che in codesta terra di libere, mirabili energie, l'ingegno italiano rifulga.

Con particolari sensi,

obbligatissimo

Da Torino. Paolo Boselli.

Mantegazza Prof. Paolo, antropologo, igienista, scrittore di scienze, educatore, senatore del Regno d'Italia:

Caro signor Carnovale: Mille grazie per il dono gentile.

Il vostro libro vibra di un caldo patriottismo che vi fa molto onore e vi battezza per un eloquente apostolo dell'Italianità in America.

Addio di cuore.

Da San Terenzio (Spezia).

Paolo Mantegazza.

Martini Ferdinando, letterato, deputato al Parlamento nazionale italiano, ex governatore dell'Eritrea, ex ministro della Pubblica Istruzione, ex ministro delle Colonie:

Pregiatissimo Sig. Carnovale: Ho ricevuto il suo bel volume e ne la ringrazio.

Le dolorose pagine della prefazione dicono di per sè quanto buona e utile opera Ella faccia con instancato vigore.

Il problema degl'Italiani all'Estero è dei più gravi fra quanti la madre patria ha da risolvere, e quello che vuol essere risoluto con studio pacato e intelletto d'amore sopra ogni altra cosa. L'Istituto Coloniale, del cui Consiglio mi onoro far parte, sta ora occupandosene: e del lavoro suo si avranno, confido, pratici e solleciti effetti.

Bene sta che a questo lavoro venga aiuto dagl'Italiani stessi che dimorano nelle Colonie; ed Ella lo porge validissimo, mantenendovi il culto della patria, della sua lingua, delle sue tradizioni gloriose.

Grazie di nuovo ed Ella mi abbia per

devotissimo suo

Da Roma. Ferdinando Martini.

Mandarono congratulazioni al Carnovale per il suo libro *Il Giornalismo degli Emigrati Italiani nel Nord America:*

Caruso Enrico, tenore.

Casolini Antonio, deputato al Parlamento nazionale italiano.

Ciccotti Prof. Ettore, deputato socialista al Parlamento nazionale italiano.
Cilea Francesco, compositore di musica, direttore del Conservatorio di Palermo.
Costa Andrea, *leader* del Partito Socialista italiano, vice presidente della Camera dei deputati.
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Rossi Prof. Luigi, Commissario Generale dell'Emigrazione.
Sonnino Sidney, deputato al Parlamento nazionale, ex ministro, ex presidente dei ministri e presente ministro degli Affari Esteri.
Vittorio Emanuele III, re d'Italia.
Zumbini Prof. Bonaventura, letterato, critico, senatore del Regno d'Italia.
E molti altri.

In preparazione:
Gli Onnipotenti
Tommaso Campanella

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